

# **University of Plymouth**

Faculty of Science and Engineering

School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences

## **Programme Specification**

MSc Town Planning (6777)  
(Level 7 Chartered Town Planner Degree Apprenticeship)

September 2021

## 1. MSc Town Planning

**Accredited Final award title**      **MSc Town Planning**

This programme is offered as a Level 7 Degree Apprenticeship as a professional development qualification for staff from local authorities and other public and private organisations utilising the Apprenticeship Levy. It is a 2.5 year part-time course and draws on the modules in the existing MSc Planning programme (4023) (namely, 100 credits of core modules, with 20 credits of specialist option modules and 60 credits of dissertation related to the specialism). The programme has been professionally accredited by the Royal Town Planning Institute (26 June, 2019). Students who meet the requirements for the accredited award will be awarded MSc Town Planning.

**UCAS code**                      -  
**JACS code**                      L722  
**HECOS codes**                100197

2. **Awarding Institution:**      University of Plymouth

**Teaching institution(s):**    University of Plymouth

3. **Accrediting body(ies)**

Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)

Full programme:

In order to meet the RTPI's specifications of a 'fully accredited postgraduate pathway', the MSc Town Planning programme includes 100 credits of core spatial planning modules, with 20 credits of specialist option module and 60 credits of dissertation, which must be related to the specialism.

### **Date of re-accreditation**

The programme is accredited by the Royal Town Planning Institute (awarded 26 June, 2019). Accreditation is renewed by the RTPI Plymouth Partnership Board on an annual and rolling basis. Plymouth was awarded full Partnership Board status by the RTPI in 2016 in relation to its MSc Planning programme. The Partnership Board consists of the RTPI Dialogue member (who also acts as Chair), a RTPI appointee, a RTPI Education Officer, two local practitioners, a senior representative from the University (Dean) and representatives from the University and School. The partnership board meets annually at the Planning School, with a particular remit to assess the effectiveness of the Planning School, through a review of an annual report on activities and achievements by the Planning School, module evaluation feedback, external examiners' reports and a meeting with students. The criteria used to judge the effectiveness of a Planning School are: a clear planning focus and leadership, clear practice focus, quality assurance, institutional support and

resources, and equality and diversity. Members of the Partnership Board have the option to meet in private session to discuss whether the school is acting as an Effective Planning School (and so retain its accreditation). Full minutes of these meetings and a report by the RTPI are produced, which are reported to the RTPI's Partnership & Accreditation Panel.

#### **4. Distinctive Features of the Programme and the Student Experience**

The RTPI requires each Effective Planning School to have a 'Statement of Educational Philosophy', which defines the definitive 'flavour' of the programmes offered. The educational philosophy of the Effective Planning School at Plymouth is informed by the recognition that planning as an activity reflects the nature of the society that it seeks to serve. In the UK, planning has transformed from a highly centralised, top-down, expert-driven form of regulation of the built environment to a more devolved and participatory form of planning based on inclusionary argumentation and participatory or discursive democracy. The prevailing paradigm of 'communicative or collaborative theory' (Healey, 1996) conceives planning as a process of facilitating collaboration between actors and stakeholder groups in the construction of strategic consensus building. Seen in this way, planning therefore becomes an interactive practice in which communication and negotiation are critical to produce better arguments and justification for policy. Policy is based on a different kind of objectivity drawn from agreement between individuals reached through free and open discourse rather than solely on an evidence base of research. However, this action takes place in a highly political and contested environment, where the perspectives of multiple actors and stakeholders need to be considered.

These perspectives are enshrined within the current planning system, which is a hybrid of the spatial planning approach, as advocated in the RTPI's 2001 New Vision for Planning, and the Localism agenda, where planning is being devolved to local communities. The key principles of planning which have emerged in these agendas are:

- Spatial: dealing with the unique needs and characteristics of places
- Sustainable: assessing the short, medium and long term consideration of social, economic and environmental effects
- Integrative: in terms of the knowledge, objectives and actions involved
- Inclusive: recognising the wide range of people involved in planning.

These key influences must be reflected in the approach to the education of the next generation of planners, who must be equipped with the understanding and skills necessary to operate as a different sort of professional. However, recognising the rapidly changing nature of the world in which they will operate, the planners of tomorrow will need the intellectual outlook and critical aptitudes to enable them to adapt to new expectations and demands. In this context, it is important for a planning education to explore dimensions of political economy, and institutional and legal frameworks in order to understand and engage with contemporary professional agendas.

## Aims of the Effective Planning School

It is the aim of the Plymouth Effective Planning School to make the knowledge and expertise which the University offers through its staff and students available to help communities across the South West address the planning issues which confront them. In so doing, the aim is to establish the University of Plymouth's Effective Planning School as a leading centre of planning education and research, which will attract students from across the UK and internationally. These aspirations will be achieved through:

- providing students with a high quality planning education based on course content which is informed by the research and professional activities of the staff;
- providing a flexible and supportive learning environment for students from as wide a range of backgrounds as possible;
- developing planning as a distinctive component of the University's research and consultancy activities focused on sustainability and the coastal/marine/rural environment; and
- developing strong and enduring local and regional partnerships, based on sharing knowledge, skills and practice for the benefit of students, staff and communities.

## Distinctive strengths

The Effective Planning School at Plymouth offers a number of distinctive strengths, which provide a unique contribution to planning education, research and practice. These are:

- **Academic-practice mix:** The mix of academic and practice based learning, which is reflected in the composition of the School's teaching staff and guest lecturers from practice, offers a complementary balance between theory and practice ensuring that students are equipped for employability. Experiential learning through real-life examples and case studies on field visits is an integral part of the teaching and learning programme.
- **Research-informed teaching and policy-making:** Academic and professional research undertaken by teaching staff ensures that the content of the programme remains up-to-date and current. Research is an essential part of the evidence base of planning and is required to ensure independent judgement and professionalism in contested situations.
- **Regional specialisms:** Being located in the far South West of England provides the opportunity for staff and students to develop specialist knowledge and understanding of the distinctive planning issues surrounding the coastal and marine environments, and rural development.
- **A multi-disciplinary approach** to teaching and learning, drawing on expertise in environmental sustainability, urban and rural planning, marine planning and architecture and design;
- **Emphasis on key skills and professionalism:** to promote competence in the key skills and professional behaviours to equip students for lifelong learning and preparation for the RTPI's Assessment of Professional

Competence (APC), which represents the End Point Assessment for the Degree Apprenticeship; and

- **Student support:** The programme team embrace a culture of support for student learning.

## Educational Philosophy

Drawing on these influences and strengths, the educational philosophy for planning at Plymouth University is manifested as follows:

- To provide plentiful opportunities for the assimilation of a core knowledge and understanding of planning as a discipline through exposure to its history, theory and practice, especially through experiential learning, such as practical work and fieldwork.
- To develop relevant specialist knowledge and expertise informed by the current research and consultancy interests of staff and access to local practice. This feature is reflected in the structure of the programme which enables students to both study and research areas of specialism. The following specialist planning modules are currently offered: Coastal Urban Regeneration and Rural Planning. It is anticipated that this approach will evolve and change over time as new staff expertise and planning issues emerge.
- To encourage exposure to a multi-disciplinary, multi-professional, team working environment which provides an appreciation of the physical design, economic/market, social/community and environmental considerations involved in optimising sustainability in place making.
- To provide a relevant and contemporary planning education, which recognises the skills required by planners in the mediation of space and place. Alongside the necessary theoretical understanding, students will develop relevant, practical skills in applied research and analysis, problem solving, negotiation and mediation, verbal and written communication, as well as management and leadership which can be applied in a range of real world contexts.
- Given the changing political, institutional, legal and market context within which planning operates, to encourage critical, rational, innovative, reflective and creative thinkers who are confident, adaptable and independent learners and who are readily employable, and equipped for life-long learning.
- To develop an understanding of the requirements of a professional through exposure to and engagement with practitioners and the planning profession.
- To develop and maintain strong relationships with professional practice and communities locally and regionally as a source of mutual support and exchange of knowledge and expertise.

These distinctive strengths contribute to the University's strategic aim to 'deliver outstanding education that makes a difference, improving local, national and global communities' (*Education and Student Experience Strategy, 2018-2023*). Planning is concerned with the use and development of land and buildings in the public interest. It is, therefore, critical to society's relationship with, and understanding of, both the built and natural environment, which address challenges at the local, national and global scales. As a professionally accredited qualification, the programme combines the rigour required by the professional body, the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI),

engagement with regional practitioners and employers, and the University's specific expertise in sustainable development, marine and coastal planning, and rural and urban regeneration. The existing MSc Planning programme has established itself as providing a substantive contribution to professional development and education in the region; a strong record of student satisfaction and employability amongst its graduates; and a contribution to the generation of research publications and new knowledge. The new MSc Town Planning programme will build on these strengths within a formal framework of direct dialogue with employers and their employees, which will have benefits for the existing MSc Planning programme.

## 5. Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Group(s)

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) (2016) *Benchmark Statement for Town and Country Planning*, QAA, Gloucester.

Full version available at:

[https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/sbs-town-and-country-planning-16.pdf?sfvrsn=9496f781\\_10](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/sbs-town-and-country-planning-16.pdf?sfvrsn=9496f781_10)

Royal Town Planning Institute (2012) *Policy Statement on Initial Planning Education*, RTPI, London. <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/education-and-careers/rtpi-response-to-education-policy-review-consultation/>

Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IATE) (2019) *Chartered Town Planner Apprenticeship Standard*, IATE, London.

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/chartered-town-planner-degree/>

The learning outcomes of the MSc Town Planning programme have been mapped against the learning outcomes of the RTPI (see Appendix II) and the Chartered Town Planner Apprenticeship Standard (see Appendix III).

## 6. Programme Structure

The Plymouth MSc Town Planning programme is based on the existing MSc Planning programme, which fulfils the RTPI's criteria as a 'fully accredited postgraduate pathway'<sup>1</sup>, in which at least one-half of the module credits must cover spatial planning (i.e. 90 credits) and one-quarter of the module credits must be in a specialist area (i.e. 45 credits). The MSc Town Planning programme includes 100 credits of core taught modules cover spatial planning (56 per cent) and 80 credits cover specialist elements (including one taught option module and the dissertation which must be on a topic in that specialist area, 44 per cent) (see Table 1).

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/education-and-careers/find-a-course/accredited-qualifications/>

**Table 1. Module credits related to the spatial and specialist elements of a combined planning programme**

<b>Spatial Planning modules (at least one-half)</b>	<b>Specialist elements (at least one-quarter)</b>
PLG501 (20 credits)	1 x 20 credits (20 credits)
PLG502 (20 credits)	[Either PLG506 or PLG508]
PLG503 (20 credits)	
PLG504 (20 credits)	
PLG505 (20 credits)	PLG511 (60 credits)
<b>Total: 100 credits (56%)</b>	<b>Total: 80 credits (44%)</b>

The MSc Town Planning (Level 7 Chartered Town Planner Degree Apprenticeship) is a professional development qualification for staff from local authorities and other organisations utilising the Apprenticeship Levy. It is a 2.5 year part-time course and draws on the modules in the MSc Planning programme (namely, 100 credits of core modules, with 20 credits of specialist option modules and 60 credits of dissertation related to the specialism). The programme maps onto the knowledge, skills and behaviours required in the Chartered Town Planner Degree Apprenticeship Standard (see Appendix III). In terms of the knowledge statements, these competencies are covered by the core modules (PLG501-PLG505) with substantial relevance to the specialisms (PLG506-PLG511). The knowledge statements related to planning theory, law, political framework, sustainability, economic framework are covered in PLG502 and PLG504, while other modules develop issues relating to stakeholder and community engagement and professional ethics (PLG501) and place-making and urban design (PLG505). The skills statements relating to the preparation and implementation of plans, policies and related documents are covered in PLG502, PLG503 and PLG504, with specific focus on critical analysis and decision-making through research, the establishment of an evidence base and project management in PLG503. The behaviour statements are covered in all modules, but with a particular emphasis on the RTPi Code of Professional Conduct, Lifelong Learning and reflective professional practice in PLG501.

As a Level 7 Chartered Town Planner Degree Apprenticeship, the MSc Town Planning programme has some key differences with the established MSc Planning programme (see Figure 1). Recruitment onto the MSc Town Planning programme involves an initial needs analysis and formulation of an individual learning plan to ensure that each apprentice has (or develops) the appropriate skills and competencies to succeed on an academic programme at this level. During the programme, academic staff make visits into the workplace to contextualise the learning and ensure that appropriate work experiences are being obtained to meet the required knowledge, skills and behaviours of a professional planner. In addition, tripartite reviews of student progress are held every 12 weeks with the apprentice, employer and teaching staff to identify action points for further professional development. All these additional opportunities for reflective learning are captured by a learning log completed by each apprentice on a continuous basis throughout the duration of the programme (APTEM). Additional Continuing Professional Development opportunities might be identified either in the workplace or University context (in terms of short courses and workshops). This reflection and action planning supports the preparation for the End Point Assessment, which is the RTPi's Assessment of Professional Competence, offering entry to chartered membership of the RTPi. Support is also provided in the preparation of the EPA after completion of

the MSc programme itself. These learning opportunities are captured by two zero-credit rated modules (PLG598 in Year 1 and PLG599 in Year 2).

### Programme structure of MSc Town Planning (Level 7 Chartered Town Planner Degree Apprenticeship)

#### Pre-programme (Year 0)

**Recruitment:** Local Planning Authorities and other organisations, as the employer, recruit an apprentice (who have appropriate qualifications and/or experience to be eligible for the programme). Training is agreed with the University through an initial needs analysis and individual learning plan.

#### On programme (September, Year 1 to March, Year 2.5)

		Part-time Year 1 (Tuesdays)		Part-time Year 2 (Thursdays)		Part-time Year 3	
		10am-1pm	2-5pm	10am-1pm	2-5pm		
Semester 1 (15 weeks)		'Extended induction' for study skills	PLG502 Spatial planning & sustainable development	PLG505 Urban design: theories, methodologies and practice	PLG503 Environmental knowledge: from field to stakeholder		
Semester 2 (15 weeks)		PLG501 Issues and values in planning practice	PLG504 Development management & delivery	Study time for dissertation preparation	Specialist module (PLG506 or PLG508)		
All year		PLG598 Reflective review in Year 1 (zero-credit)		PLG599 Reflective review in Year 2 (zero-credit)			
		<p><b>Specialisms (options):</b>            PLG506 Rural Planning            PLG508 Coastal Urban Regeneration</p>				PLG511 (part-time) Dissertation (Based on specialist module) Submit mid-March of year following completion of taught modules <b>(ie. in Year 3)</b>	

#### Post programme (March, Year 2.5 to September, Year 3)

**Gateway:** completion of RTPI fully accredited qualification at Level 7; at least 12 months practical experience in a log book; and apprentice meets the apprenticeship standard.

**End Point Assessment:** Professional discussion and Assessment of Professional Competence by RTPI.

**Figure 1. Structure of the MSc Town Planning programme (Level 7 Chartered Town Planner Degree Apprenticeship)**

## **7. Programme Aims**

The aims of the MSc Town Planning programme are to:

- offer a relevant and contemporary planning curriculum, enriched by the scholarly activity of staff and a multidisciplinary context
- provide plentiful opportunities for the assimilation of knowledge and understanding in planning, especially through experiential learning such as practical work, work-based learning, authentic assignments and fieldwork
- develop a wide range of intellectual and key skills, such as research and problem-solving, an appreciation of design principles, team-working and communication, both written and oral and using a variety of media
- promote critical, rational, innovative, reflective and creative thinkers who are confident, adaptable and independent learners and who are readily employable, equipped for life-long learning, and
- equip individuals who are committed to be effective and responsible planning professionals.

## **8. Programme Intended Learning Outcomes**

The Programme ILOs below are presented as standard University Level 7 outcomes, but map onto the Chartered Town Planner Apprenticeship Standard (see Appendix III).

### **8.1 Knowledge and understanding**

On successful completion, graduates should be able to demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of:

1. The processes of socio-economic and environmental change and their spatial outcomes as planning issues and problems
2. Human land use and development processes, including development viability and finance, and its relationship with planning
3. Political, legal and institutional frameworks for effective policy-making and implementation
4. Awareness and understanding of spatial planning, sustainable development (including climate change), community engagement and urban design
5. Conceptual and theoretical understanding of explanations underpinning the evolution and practice of planning, including values and ethics
6. Current debates and agendas in planning and be able to position these within historical and theoretical perspectives

7. An in-depth specialist area of planning and its inter-relationships with spatial planning

## **8.2 Cognitive and intellectual skills**

On successful completion, graduates should be able to:

1. critically analyse literature
2. assess the reliability and validity of evidence
3. develop reasoned and informed arguments
4. synthesise and evaluate information from disparate sources in order to generate integrated and well substantiated responses to spatial planning challenges
5. evaluate the potential of data and methodologies for problem-solving within the context of planning
6. make sound judgements around complex and conflicting issues often in the face of partial and uncertain evidence

## **8.3 Key and transferable skills**

On successful completion, graduates should be able to:

1. communicate ideas, principles and theories effectively by oral, written and visual means
2. undertake effective research information sourcing to establish an evidence base
3. collate, analyse and interpret data in quantitative and qualitative forms
4. work independently and organise his/her own learning
5. participate effectively and supportively in groups, meeting obligations to others (especially in a multi-professional working environment)
6. reflect on their own learning and evaluate personal strengths and weaknesses

## **8.4 Employment-related skills**

On successful completion, graduates should be able to:

1. demonstrate awareness and understanding of professional working, roles, responsibilities and ethical values
2. engage effectively in reflection and action planning for personal and career development
3. prepare for the RTPI's Assessment of Professional Competence

4. appreciate the importance of life-long learning and reflect critically on their career plans and skills needs

### **8.5 Practical skills**

On successful completion, graduates should be able to:

1. demonstrate negotiation, mediation, leadership and networking skills likely to facilitate collaborative policy formulation and implementation
2. employ appropriate techniques and methods for effective community engagement over the formulation and implementation of plans and development proposals
3. use creative problem-solving skills and generate spatial planning responses
4. critically evaluate urban design using appropriate theories and practice
5. plan, design, execute and report on an original research investigation
6. monitor and evaluate planning interventions and outcomes

### **8. Admissions Criteria, including APCL, APEL and Disability Service arrangements**

The admissions criteria for the MSc Town Planning programme are through either (a) academic qualifications or (b) substantial professional experience:

(a) Academic entry:

- Students admitted to the MSc Town Planning programmes are expected to have an Honours degree (second class or better) in a relevant discipline (e.g., planning, geography, architecture, environmental science, sociology, economics, engineering, history, geosciences, biological sciences or otherwise suitably qualified candidates).
- A minimum grade C in English Language and Maths at GCSE level OR a minimum overall score of 6.5, with at least 5.5 in each element, IELTS.

(b) Professional experience entry:

- At least five years of professional experience is the minimum requirement for applications from applicants without the usual academic qualifications.
- A minimum grade C in English Language and Maths at GCSE level OR a minimum overall score of 6.5, with at least 5.5 in each element, IELTS.

As part of the recruitment process, the University's Academic Partnerships Apprenticeship Team will undertake a robust initial assessment process of applicants to identify learning and/or disability needs. A personalised action plan will be devised to ensure that the necessary additional learning support is in place at the start of the programme to allow the apprentice to succeed. Indeed, the Initial Needs Assessment might require the applicant to defer entry until appropriate education/training support

has been completed to a satisfactory standard. The delivery team will be informed of the proposed support plan/package in place and will ensure that the support is carried through into the delivery of their programme. The support needs of each apprentice are discussed at every review in order to assist apprentices who may not have disclosed an issue at the start. The Employer Relationship Liaison (ERL) team and the programme team work closely together to make sure that the apprentices' needs are being met to ensure that they can be successful learners. These processes are explained in Appendix 1 of the Approval Document (Section 2.2).

In compliance with the University's equal opportunities policy, all appropriately qualified applicants will be given equal consideration during the selection process and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of gender, ethnicity, colour, disability, religion, nationality, age, occupation, marital status, sexual orientation or any other irrelevant distinction.

The University welcomes applications from people with disabilities who will be considered on the same academic grounds as other potential students. Considerations about individual needs arising from disability will be made separately, and the University will strive to meet an individual disabled student's needs wherever possible.

Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL) and Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL): Students can exceptionally apply for exemption from any modules through APEL or APCL, following standard University procedures. This decision will be made by the Director of the Effective Planning School, the Programme Leader and the Academic Partnership Apprenticeship Team. Each case will also be referred to the Chair of the RTPI Partnership Board for Plymouth and the RTPI Education Officer for approval. However, cases for APEL are likely to be only made in very exceptional circumstances as experience does not necessarily equate to the academic standards and competencies that the completion of a Masters degree requires.

## **9. Progression criteria for Final and Intermediate Awards**

The MSc Town Planning programmes meets the normal University academic regulations with some additional accrediting body (RTPI) requirements. In order to be eligible for the award of MSc Town Planning, students must achieve a pass mark of at least 50% in all assessments.

The University's assessment regulations can be found at:  
<https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/essential-information/regulations>

## **10. Non Standard Regulations**

As with the existing MSc Planning programme, the new MSc Town Planning programme requires an exception to University regulations, which was granted on 20 June, 2019 (Email from Ruth Weaver, Chair of ARSC, 20.6.19).

Due to the requirements of the professional accrediting body (the Royal Town Planning Institute), each module and individual assignments within the modules must be passed with a minimum of 50%; modules are not compensatable on the MSc Planning programmes. As a consequence, there is also an exception to the form of referral: namely that referrals are undertaken at the individual assessment level rather than at element level.

## **11. Transitional Arrangements**

Not applicable.

**Appendix I. Programme Specification Mapping (PGT): module contribution to the meeting of Award Learning Outcomes**

Module	Credits	C core E elective	Award Learning Outcomes contributed to (for more information see Section 8)																		Compensation Y/N	Assessment elements(s) and weightings [use KIS definition] E1 - exam E2 - clinical exam T1 - test C1 - coursework A1 - generic assessment P1 - practical									
			8.1 Knowledge & Understanding						8.2 Cognitive & intellectual skills						8.3 Key & transferable skills								8.4 Employment related skills						8.5 Practical skills		
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6				
PLG501	20	C	x			x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x			No	C1 (100%)	
PLG502	20	C	x		x	x				x	x	x	x		x		x										x		x	No	C1 (100%)
PLG504	20	C		x	x	x	x				x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			No	C1 (90%); P1 (10%)	
<b>Learning Outcomes 60 credits</b>			x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		
PLG503	20	C								x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x						x	x	No	C1 (100%)	
PLG505	20	C				x	x	x		x		x		x		x	x			x							x		No	C1 (90%); P1 (10%)	
Specialism PLG513	20	E	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x					x	x		x	No	C1 (100%)	
Specialism PLG508	20	E	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x					x			x	No	C1 (100%)	
<b>Learning Outcomes 120 credits</b>			x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
PLG511	60	C							x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	No	C1 (100%)	
<b>Learning Outcomes 180 credits</b>			x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
<b>Confirmed Award LOs</b>			x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			

## **APPENDIX II**

### **RTPI LEARNING OUTCOMES MATRIX & COMMENTARY**



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RTPI Learning Outcomes Matrix – Postgraduate Courses

<b>Planning School</b>	<b>UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH</b>
<b>Title of course</b>	<b>MSc Planning and MSc Town Planning (L7 Chartered Town Planner Degree Apprenticeship)</b>
<b>Date form completed</b>	<b>26 APRIL, 2019</b>

Within the matrix, please indicate where the learning outcomes have been **Introduced (I)**, **Consolidated (C)** and **Assessed (A)**.

**Introduced** = the learning outcome is first presented to the student

**Consolidated** = the topic is developed further, allowing the student to engage with the concept on a deeper critical or intellectual level – the student is able to engage in discussion about the concept

**Assessed** = the student's knowledge of the concept presented in the learning outcome is tested

If the course is longer than one year FTE, please complete a copy of the matrix for each year of the course. **If the programme is to carry specialist accreditation only, please do not complete the spatial learning outcomes section of the matrix.**

Should the 'commentary' column be insufficient for your needs, as an alternative, please provide a supplementary MS Word document with a short paragraph outlining how the learning outcome is addressed in the module(s).



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RTPI Learning Outcomes	Core Modules						Optional Modules		Commentary – please outline briefly how the learning outcome is met by the module
	PLG501 Issues & Values in Planning Practice	PLG502 Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development	PLG504 Development Management and Delivery	PLG503 Environmental knowledge: from field to stakeholder	PLG505 Urban Design: theories, methodologies and practice	PLG510/511 Dissertation	PLG506 Rural Planning	PLG508 Coastal Urban Regeneration	See following commentary
1. Explain and demonstrate how spatial planning operates within the context of institutional and legal frameworks.		ICA	CA		CA				
2. Generate integrated and well substantiated responses to spatial planning challenges.		C	CA		ICA				
3. Reflect on the arguments for and against spatial planning and particular theoretical approaches, and assess what can be learnt from experience of	CA	ICA			C				



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spatial planning in different contexts and spatial scales.									
4. Demonstrate how efficient resource management helps to deliver effective spatial planning.		ICA	C						
5. Explain the political and ethical nature of spatial planning and reflect on how planners work effectively within democratic decision-making structures.	CA	IC	CA	C	C				
6. Explain the contribution that planning can make to the built and natural environment and in particular recognise the implications of climate change.	C	ICA	C						
7. Debate the concept of rights and the legal and practical implications of	C		ICA						



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representing these rights in planning decision making process.									
8. Evaluate different development strategies and the practical application of development finance; assess the implications for generating added value for the community.		IC	CA						
9. Explain the principles of equality and equality of opportunity in relation to spatial planning in order to positively promote the involvement of different communities, and evaluate the importance and effectiveness of community	CA	IC	CA	CA	C				



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engagement in the planning process.									
10. Evaluate the principles and processes of design for creating high quality places and enhancing the public realm for the benefit of all in society.			ICA		ICA				
11. Demonstrate effective research, analytical, evaluative and appraisal skills and the ability to reach appropriate, evidence based decisions.		IC	CA	ICA	ICA				
12. Recognise the role of communication skills in the planning process and the importance of working in an inter-disciplinary context, and be able to demonstrate negotiation,	IC		CA	IC	CA				



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mediation, advocacy and leadership skills.									
13. Distinguish the characteristics of a professional, including the importance of upholding the highest standards of ethical behaviour and a commitment to lifelong learning and critical reflection so as to maintain and develop professional competence.	ICA	IC	C	C	C				
<b>Specialist Learning Outcomes</b>									
1. Engage in theoretical, practical and ethical debate at the forefront of the area of the specialism in the context of spatial planning						ICA	ICA	ICA	
2. Evaluate the social, economic,						ICA	ICA	ICA	



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environmental and political context for the area of specialism									
3. Evaluate the distinctive contribution of the specialism to the making of place and the mediation of space						ICA	ICA	ICA	
4. Assess the contribution of the specialism to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change						ICA	ICA	ICA	



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## COMMENTARY ON UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH LEARNING OUTCOME MATRIX

### LEARNING OUTCOMES OF CORE MODULES

#### **Explain and demonstrate how spatial planning operates within the context of institutional and legal frameworks**

Under the spatial planning approach, planners take the role of pro-active and strategic coordinators of all policy and actions that influence spatial and sustainable development. The planners' role is therefore both more integrative, involving collaboration with other actors and stakeholders, and more inclusive of the diversity of views that might exist within community groups. While sustainability is a key concern, the central aspiration of the approach is to create better places and deliver high-quality environments through a process of participatory engagement and consensus within local communities and amongst relevant agencies. The operation and context of spatial planning is introduced in **PLG502 (Semester 1)**. The starting point for the module is an exploration of the case for global action based on the work of the World Commission on the Environment (the Brundtland Report). The translation of the call for action which emanated from Rio into policy frameworks at EU and UK is examined, highlighting the key role which planning is expected to play in delivering sustainable development and the mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

The changing institutional context within which planning operates is considered by focusing on the different scales of planning together with the influence of European ideas about spatial planning on the traditional UK approach to land use planning. The emergence of a statutory basis for planning in the first half of the twentieth century is traced, including an examination of the arguments for intervention in the public interest deployed in the run up to the Town and Country Planning Act 1947. The reasoning behind subsequent reforms in 1968, 1990, 2004 and 2011 are examined, including the changing political context and structure of local government. The changing relationship between different scales (national, regional, sub-regional and local) at which planning takes place are considered tracing the waxing and waning of regional planning and the growth of Localism.

The emergence of spatial planning from its European roots and its formal introduction through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 is traced. Using a combination of academic debate and a practical focus on case studies of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Framework, students are required to demonstrate their understanding of how the spatial planning approach differs from traditional land use planning. This evaluation reinforces their understanding and ensures that this key learning outcome is delivered.

This learning outcome is assessed through (1) a critical evaluation of whether the introduction of the spatial planning approach has resulted in a significant change in focus on sustainable development in the forward planning policy as reflected in the Development Plan documents of a local authority in SW England; and (2) the formulation of a development plan policy for a source of renewable energy in SW England.

The learning outcome is then consolidated in **PLG504 (Semester 2)**, which focuses on the mechanisms for the delivery of spatial planning objectives. The module develops an understanding of the legal foundations upon which spatial planning is based, including the key elements of administrative and property law. The case for intervention through planning and other forms of public control is examined, together with the basis for planning control over 'development', taking account of statutory provisions, regulation and



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relevant case law. The assessment of the module is through assignments, which require the consideration of a planning application and preparation of a planning officer's report, and the preparation of a development brief, incorporating viability and design considerations for a mixed use regeneration site. The operation of spatial planning is also highlighted in **PLG505** (especially in relation to urban design), the specialism modules and the dissertation. The first assignment of PLG505 raises the students' awareness of the theoretical basis of urban design guidance in planning and the second focuses on the students' critical assessment of urban design.

### **Generate integrated and well substantiated responses to spatial planning challenges**

The practical application of spatial planning in the generation of integrated and well substantiated responses to challenges is also introduced in **PLG502 (Semester 1)**. The use of visioning as a means of developing a cohesive approach to spatial planning and place making is investigated by drawing on a variety of case studies. The process of moving from vision to strategy, plan and policy development is evaluated, including approaches for taking account of stakeholder interests and fully exploring sustainability factors. This outcome is assessed in Assignment 2, which requires students to develop spatial planning policy for renewable energy development in the South West taking into account social, economic and environmental factors.

The learning outcome is then consolidated in **PLG504** (Semester 2), which focuses on the mechanisms for the delivery of spatial planning objectives. The assessment of the module is by a consideration of a planning application and the preparation of a development brief, incorporating economic viability and design considerations for mixed use regeneration of a strategic site. In previous years, the development brief has been based on real-life situations, such as a municipal car park site and industrial estate in Newton Abbot (with Teignbridge District Council); a car park and derelict port area on Plymouth waterfront; a neglected civic centre and car parks in Totnes town Centre (with Totnes Town Council); and the potential for redevelopment around a new flagship project ('the Box').

**PLG505** (Semester 1) also provides an opportunity to generate integrated and well substantiated responses to spatial planning challenges related to urban design. In this module, students are encouraged to utilise existing urban theoretical frameworks to investigate how the configuration of the urban fabric, especially the space between buildings, affects human use of and behaviour in that space. Both the University campus and Plymouth city centre have been used as case studies for the students' own empirical observations based around themes of encounters and inclusion, communication and interaction, connections, access and movement, and activities and uses. The students also critically evaluate the urban design of large and small housing projects in Plymouth as Assignment 2 of this module, which is assessed on the basis of a presentation and poster.

### **Reflect on the arguments for and against spatial planning and particular theoretical approaches, and assess what can be learnt from experience of spatial planning in different contexts and spatial scales**

The **PLG501** Issues and Values in Planning module is an exploration of the development of planning theory through various 'paradigms' in planning, which provides insights into the arguments for and against different styles of planning and the evolution towards spatial planning. The regulatory role of planning from the 1940s was characterised by both substantive planning theories concerned with the creation of an ideal



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environment, such as utopian conceptions of garden cities and comprehensive redevelopment of blitzed cities, and by the 1960s planning theories emphasising scientific and rational approaches to policy formulation. The 'top-down' nature of the intervention, the inflexibility of the 'end-state' nature of the plans, and the system's failure to effectively consult and engage with the general public became widely held criticisms of the approach.

The emergence of a more communicative or collaborative approach to planning introduced a more participatory form of planning based on inclusionary argumentation and participatory or discursive democracy. The arrival of the spatial planning approach with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act of 2004 and the Localism Act of 2011 encouraging Neighbourhood Plans therefore represented the culmination of moves towards the creation of better places through a more participatory and inclusive process. Whether the reality matches this aspiration has been questioned, including the capacity and leadership to deliver the agenda, the real added value of community consultation to the process, and whether the scope of spatial planning has become too broad to be a meaningful and effective activity. The students are given an opportunity to evaluate these approaches in the first assignment of PLG501.

This module is complemented by **PLG502** Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development, which introduces students to operational aspects of spatial planning. The second assignment focuses on the different approaches to the monitoring and evaluation of spatial planning policy in two case studies. It attempts to draw out what planning is attempting to achieve. **PLG505** also exposes the students to thinking about the effectiveness of planning intervention in shaping design and quality of place. The second assignment specifically requires student to critically evaluate the role of planning in influencing urban design.

### **Demonstrate how efficient resource management helps to deliver effective spatial planning**

**PLG502** Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development seeks to expose students to debates surrounding human over-exploitation of natural resources. The theories of Malthus and Lovelock are introduced as is the work on 'Limits to Growth' and One Planet Living. This review sets the context for examining the importance of achieving sustainable patterns of urban living involving more efficient use of resources, which is explored through the work of academics (e.g. Kenworthy) and practitioners (e.g. Urban Task Force) as well as 'best practice' examples of sustainable urban development from Europe. This approach enables concepts such as urban villages, sustainable communities and eco-towns to be understood and the links between urban density, land use patterns, transportation and energy use to be explored.

Students have the opportunity to explore the process of developing spatial planning policies through an assignment focused on a selected form of renewable energy development. This section confronts students with the challenge of combining physical, economic and community considerations in a way that could promote local energy sources across a particular location. Students have, for example, explored the potential for effective use of solar power and wind power in Cornwall, biomass generation in Plymouth and small-scale hydro in the Dartmoor National Park.

At a smaller scale, **PLG504** Development Management and Delivery requires students to examine the effective use of land through their group project. This assignment involves preparing a brief to promote the development of underutilised sites through the spatial planning process, which requires them to address the key issues of viability alongside urban design. In this way, students develop an appreciation of



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the 'value' which can be unlocked through spatial planning for both landowners/developers and the public /community.

**Explain the political and ethical nature of spatial planning and reflect on how planners work effectively within democratic decision-making structures**

The content of **PLG501** and **PLG502** places spatial planning firmly within the context of political discourse and academic theory. By tracing its historical development, the influence of both socialist and neo-liberal philosophy on town and country planning and, more recently, spatial planning is revealed. **PLG501** aims to engage students in current debates around planning as a basis for developing an appreciation of the inherently political nature of the subject. This discourse has clearly been facilitated in recent years by the profile which planning has 'enjoyed'.

More specifically, **PLG501** and **PLG502** devote sessions to examining the role which consultation plays in the plan making process and the challenge of engaging with a representative cross-section of opinion. The need to pay particular attention to 'hard to reach' and minority groups in society is explored. The characteristics of representative and participatory democratic models are highlighted, including an analysis of the profile of local elected councillors.

The role of spatial planning in addressing issues of equity is explored in some detail in a **PLG502** session, which seeks to provide students with an understanding of social and community considerations in planning. The spatial patterning of disadvantage is discussed using key measures of deprivation. The session also examines the nature of poverty and explanations, which have been put forward to explain it. This topic leads naturally to consideration of the role which spatial planning can play in promoting a more equitable society.

These issues are further explored through **PLG504**, which explores the respective roles of professional planner and democratically elected member of a local planning authority in the decision-making process. The difficult position in which professional find themselves is highlighted and students are made aware of the importance of an ability to reach reasoned and balanced recommendations which can stand up to the scrutiny of both planning committee and Planning Inspector. Assignment 2 includes a reflective account that requires students to demonstrate and understand the political environment in which they have to operate as a planner. Further understanding is provided through external speakers who speak candidly to students about their role as professional planners operating in the 'real world'.

**PLG503** introduces students to the ethical issues related to undertaking research involving human participants, which then forms part of the planning for and implementation of the dissertation research project (**PLG510/511**). Issues of positionality are also particularly important for part-time students undertaking a research project into a topic related to their full-time employment. Students are encouraged to examine and evaluate these issues as part of their methodology chapter.

**Explain the contribution that planning can make to the built and natural environment and in particular recognise the implications of climate change**



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Planning has been identified as a key instrument in delivering sustainable development with responsibility for reconciling economic imperatives (ie. facilitation of new development), and environmental and social demands. In this context, planning has the capacity to help reduce carbon emissions (mitigation) and promote resilience to the potentially damaging effects of climate change (adaptation). The potential contribution of planning in recognising the implications of climate change is covered in a number of modules. First, **PLG502** (Semester 1) develops an appreciation of global pressures for sustainable development and how these have influenced policy-making and practice in planning. This discussion includes an exploration of the concept of sustainable development as applied in planning and the role which planning is expected to play in limiting and adapting to climate change. This learning outcome is assessed through (1) a critical evaluation of whether the introduction of the spatial planning approach has resulted in a significant change in focus on sustainable development in the forward planning policy as reflected in the Development Plan documents of a local authority in SW England; and (2) the formulation of a development plan policy for a source of renewable energy in SW England. This context is consolidated in **PLG501** (Semester 2), where the implications of climate change is set in the historical context of the evolution of planning theories and thought.

Second, **PLG504** (Semester 2) focuses on the delivery of spatial planning objectives, especially how planning decisions. Planning seeks to promote sustainable urban design and patterns of land use through the reuse of brownfield sites, higher density to limit urban sprawl, the development of alternative energy generation and by reviewing environmental risks and anticipating adaptations to new climatic conditions (such as from flooding, sea level rise, erosion, subsidence and storms). The assessment of the module is by a consideration of a planning application and the preparation of a development brief, which both require integration of the principles of sustainability into the decision-making.

### **Debate the concept of rights and the legal and practical implications of representing these rights in planning decision-making process**

The overall purpose of spatial planning is concerned with achieving a public or collective good through the distribution, organisation and appearance of development, human activity and land use. In doing so, the legal basis and operation of the planning system can directly affect the rights of individuals, corporate entities and organisations.

These issues are introduced in **PLG504** (Semester 2), which explores the legal rights of property and impact of planning and other forms of public intervention over private activities. These aspects are reinforced by external contributions about the practical management of the development control system and in the representations at the mock planning inquiry exercise. The practical application of these aspects in development management are assessed in Assignment 1, which requires students to weigh a range of material considerations in preparing a recommendation on complex planning application. The concept of rights in the planning decision making process is also consolidated in **PLG501** (Semester 2) within the historical perspective of planning theory and thought. The operation of the top-down style of planning through the 1950s and 1960s, especially involving comprehensive redevelopment of slum housing areas, where proposals blighted communities for many years creating substantial hardships for residents.

### **Evaluate different development strategies and the practical application of development finance; assess the implications for generating added-value for the community**



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This learning outcome is introduced in **PLG502** (Semester 1), where the importance of ensuring that plans and proposals are capable of delivery in the light of development viability and finance is highlighted. The theme is consolidated and assessed in **PLG504** (Semester 2), where the interaction between planning and real estate is explored with the aim of developing an understanding of residential and commercial property markets. The principles of valuation and development viability and their implications for spatial planning are investigated, including the role of planning in the creation and capture of value. The role of planning conditions, Section 106 agreements and Community Infrastructure Levy in promoting good planning are examined and the procedures and approaches to the enforcement of planning control investigated. The module concludes with an investigation of the tools available to planners to promote the delivery of development in the public interest. This section includes the role and use of Compulsory Purchase alongside other approaches. Viability is a key component of the formulation of a development brief in Assignment 2.

**Explain the principles of equality and equality of opportunity in relation to spatial planning in order to positively promote the involvement of different communities, and evaluate the importance and effectiveness of community engagement in the planning process**

The historical perspective adopted in **PLG501** (Semester 2) reveals that one of the key roles of planning through its history has been to reduce social and spatial inequalities. The origins of the modern planning system in the UK lie in the public health and housing issues of the Victorian city and the regional economic disparities of the 1930s. Planning intervention has acted to reduce social deprivation and exclusion to create sustainable and inclusive communities. Nevertheless, decisions in planning have been criticised for not giving sufficient consideration to the needs, aspirations, perceptions and priorities of all groups in society, including women, young people and children, older people, ethnic minorities and the disabled. The consequence has been that, rather than improving the participation of these groups in community life, the outcomes of planning decisions have actually exacerbated the barriers.

The module contrasts the top-down, technocratic approach of early planning approaches in the 1940s with the emergence of tokenistic public participation from the 1960s to its more fundamental role in engaging communities and neighbourhood planning of the present day. In addition, community consultation forms an important aspect of the skills section of this module, where the practicalities of undertaking community consultation are considered. Awareness of the importance of community engagement is also recognised in the questionnaire design and surveys in **PLG503** (Semester 1) and the delivery of planning objectives and development management in **PLG504** (Semester 2). The importance and effectiveness of community engagement forms a unifying theme through most modules on the programme. **PLG505** also introduces urban design issues related to achieving inclusiveness.

**Evaluate the principles and processes of design for creating high quality places and enhancing the public realm for the benefit of all in society**

Urban design is introduced in two modules: **PLG505** (Semester 1) and **PLG504** (Semester 2). **PLG505** provides an introductory overview of the theories related to the issues related to the understanding and design of urban space and how urban form affects human use and behaviour in the spaces between buildings. In previous years, both the University campus and Plymouth city centre have been used as case



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studies for the students' own empirical observations based around themes of encounters and inclusion, communication and interaction, connections, access and movement, and activities and uses. The findings of these studies have implications for the urban design of such spaces, which form the basis of the assessment of housing schemes around Plymouth (assignment 2). In **PLG504** (Semester 2), the principles of urban design are introduced in sessions about making quality places and the role of planning in promoting 'good design'. The way in which planning seeks to influence design is considered through an evaluation of the role of design guides and the use of design panels in development management decisions. Assignment 2 involves developing a development and design brief, which requires a demonstration of the understanding of the principles of urban design.

### **Demonstrate effective research, analytical, evaluative and appraisal skills and the ability to reach appropriate, evidence based decisions**

Research skills for building an evidence base in planning and as preparation for an academic research project in the dissertation are introduced in **PLG503** (Semester 1). The module reviews quantitative and qualitative research methods relevant to professional and academic investigations in the field of planning. Information is a tool for policy-makers to use to make choices. The ability to carry out and interpret technical analysis is part of the basis for the legitimacy of planning as a profession. The DCLG's advice (2007) on using evidence in spatial planning recognised the importance of information on the character of place and community, the wants and needs for the future, and the management of change. Four types of information were specified: (1) analysis of data from existing statistics; (2) background reports on specific topics; (3) characterisation and community studies; and (4) knowledge from stakeholders and community members. The content and structure of the module is based around these themes.

The importance of maps as a source of past and present spatial information (via Digimap and Historic Digimap), as a basis for characterisation studies and, through effective design and presentation, as a form of communication is emphasised together with the potential of Geographical Information Systems (GIS). The value and retrieval methods of socio-economic data sources, such as the Population Census (via Neighbourhood Statistics and Casweb), Indices of Deprivation (via Neighbourhood Statistics), and Geodemographics (UK Geodemographic classification, Mosaic), are evaluated. Demographic, household, economic and land availability forecasting are also outlined. These aspects are assessed by each student producing a neighbourhood area profile report for an area of their own choice. Primary data collection and analysis is discussed in sessions on questionnaire design and sampling; data analysis using SPSS; and qualitative interviews and focus groups. The second assignment involves the design, data collection, data processing, analysis, interpretation and presentation of a survey. In the past, annual customer satisfaction surveys for Plymouth City Council and surveys of ward councillors, local planning authorities and coastal community teams about planning support for local communities for Planning Aid England have been undertaken. The module also outlines the expectations of the dissertation project (**PLG510/PLG511**). The original research undertaken in the dissertation represents the largest challenge and test of each individual student's research capabilities.

Research skills permeate all modules on the programme given the nature of Masters' coursework requirements. In particular, **PLG502** (Semester 1) concludes with a critical examination of the methodological and practical challenges involved in monitoring and evaluating the performance of spatial planning in delivering the objectives set for it across a range of geographic scales, with an associated



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assignment. **PLG505** (Semester 2) provides an opportunity to investigate an urban design theme through original research, with policy implications and wider understanding of urban form.

**Recognise the role of communication skills in the planning process and the importance of working in an inter-disciplinary context, and be able to demonstrate negotiation, mediation, advocacy and leadership skills**

The emergence of the ‘communicative or collaborative turn’ in planning theory and the centrality of community engagement in spatial planning and the localism agenda has begun to shift the conception of planning towards a process of facilitating communicative collaboration between actors and groups in the construction of strategic consensus building. Planning has therefore become an interactive practice, in which communication and negotiation are critical to produce better arguments and justifications for policy. Policy is based on a different kind of objectivity drawn from agreement between individuals reached through free and open discourse, rather than solely on an evidence base of research. It represents a more participatory form of planning based on inclusionary argumentation and participatory or discursive democracy (Healey, 1996; 2007). These shifts are introduced in **PLG501** (Semester 2) in both the historical perspective on the development of planning theory and theory as well as in the key skills required in contemporary planning, which specifically focuses on community consultation, negotiation and mediation. Communication skills, both written (essays and reports) and verbal presentations, are covered during induction and throughout the programme, including individual presentations which are critiqued formatively. This experience helps students to practice and improve their presentational skills in subsequent presentations throughout the programme. The role of communication in community engagement is also considered in this module. The pros and cons as well as the practicalities of community consultation are reviewed, together with the general principles of negotiation and mediation. The sessions on mediation include an in-class role-play exercise, in which the students each act as mediator in one of four stages of the mediation process. Reflection on this experience and those of other members of the group form the basis of one of the entries for assessment 2, which acts as a ‘mock’ Assessment of Professional Competence following the format of the RTPI’s L-APC. In **PLG504**, the students also develop and present a planning brief for a real development site (Assignment 2), and present their ideas to relevant local planners. Presentations, including one assessed, are also a central component of **PLG505** (assignment 2).

**Distinguish the characteristics of a professional, including the importance of upholding the highest standards of ethical behaviour and a commitment to lifelong learning and critical reflection so as to maintain and develop professional competence**

Given the dynamic context for planning activity, professional planners must maintain and develop their professional competence through high standards of ethical behaviour and a commitment to lifelong learning. The RTPI’s Code of Professional Conduct (2016) emphasises the importance of members maintaining not only their professional competence, but also of maintaining ethical standards in terms of practising in a non-discriminatory way, exercising independent judgement, avoiding conflict of interests and maintaining confidentiality. These values are introduced in **PLG501** (Semester 1) where the changing demands on, and approaches of, the professional planner are set in a historical context. It is all too apparent that a planner trained even 30 years ago will now require a totally different skills set to operate with professional competence. The final assessment of this module is a careers management exercise,



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which replicates the RTPI's APC process. Students are required to produce a shortened log book, reflective professional experience and competence statement, and professional development plan. The practical exercises in **PLG502, PLG503, PLG504, PLG505** and **the specialism options** require students to adopt the characteristics of a professional planner in this work.

## **SPECIALIST LEARNING OUTCOMES OF OPTION MODULES**

The following section explains how each of the option modules offered meets the RTPI's Specialist Learning Outcomes. The dissertation research project, undertaken by each student in their area of specialism, also meet this set of learning outcomes. These modules also reinforce many of the RTPI's Learning Outcomes for core modules.

### **PLG506 Rural Planning**

#### **Engage in theoretical, practical and ethical debate at the forefront of the area of the specialism in the context of spatial planning**

The module engages with a wide range of theoretical debates that are at the forefront of rural spatial planning. These include how rurality has been theorised by academics and policy makers; theories of governance and decision making; ideas of power; discussion of rural politics and stakeholder interests, as well as human-environment interactions in rural areas and associated planning challenges. These are applied to explain range of empiric examples in rural spatial planning such as the provision of affordable housing, transport planning, community development, national parks, protected areas in rural areas and the specific case study of conflicts over wind farms in the countryside.

Contributions by guest speakers shed light on some of the practical debates in rural planning. For example, contributors from South Hams District Council and Devon Rural Community Council discuss how partnership working in rural development provides a platform for debate and engagement from a wide range of actors. The first assignment is based on practical exercise (a mock multi-agency funding application) which allows students to combine theoretical knowledge to a 'real world' problem. Practical issues are re-enforced by a day-long fieldtrip that examines rural spatial planning in the South Hams and Dartmoor National Park. The second assignment tests students' knowledge with regard to academic debates on a specific environmental planning challenge in a case study area of the students' choice, and requires them to analyse in detail specific planning-related issues linked to the protection of the rural environment.

Ethical debates in spatial planning are addressed in class discussions. We consider who should benefit from rural planning, the ethics of working with rural communities, specific conflicts associated with different stakeholder interests, and how non-human actors can be ethically represented in planning debates. Ideas of citizenship and governance provide the foundations for these discussions.

#### **Evaluate the social, economic, environmental and political context for the area of specialism**



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The module offers a 'long view' of rural planning and places much emphasis on the social, economic, environmental and political contexts. The first session of the module, for example, examines how rural society is no longer based on paternalistic communities but is, instead, determined by changing global and national structures. Attention is given to processes such as counterurbanisation, gentrification, cultural change and commodification. The second part of the course focuses on multiple stakeholder pathways and planning challenges in rural areas and on complex human-environment interactions in an increasingly multifunctional countryside. Within these contexts, the module examines the changing structures of rural politics and policies. For example, it considers how changing politics and policies at national and local levels have contributed to a shift from land-based town and country planning towards partnership working and localised spatial planning and how a changing policy environment has contributed to both exacerbating and alleviating environmental conflict in rural areas. Attention is given to the ways in which rural planning and development agencies have undergone labyrinthine changes in response to these measures.

### **Evaluate the distinctive contribution of the specialism to the making of place and the mediation of space**

The introduction of the spatial planning approach represented a significant shift in the management and development of rural areas (Gallent, *et al.*, 2008). Town and country planning had a narrow scope on the regulation of land use and was local authority-driven and owned, with tight boundaries, topic-based and limited monitoring. Spatial planning broadened the scope of intervention and was based on collaboration, partnership and engagement, with loose boundaries, integrated and continual review. In rural areas, these shifts enabled a range of statutory and community groups to forge new alliances and initiatives. These changes are often referred to as the shift from government to governance. Under Localism, the potential for rural communities to play a much bigger part in running their own affairs and shaping their future development can be realised. There is a need for better partnership working between all agencies and actors to meet the needs of the local community and to deliver locally managed services and better environmental protection. There are some inherent problems in this apparent devolution of power as local groups can lack credibility and influence, as well as suffer from being unrepresentative and/or self-interested of the whole community. Inevitably, the public sector, and planners in particular, remain the key actor in the process to guide, provide resources and mediate between choices. The module examines these issues in a range of contexts including community development, service provision, economic development, protected areas management, and planning for renewable energy production in the countryside.

### **Assess the contribution of the specialism to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change**

Sustainability is a key theme running through this module and students are encouraged to consider it in a range of planning contexts, viz: transport planning, the provision of 'code' housing, the importance of managing protected areas and the use of rural spaces for the provision of renewable energy. Indeed, the installation and development of major renewable energy generation technologies, such as wind farms and solar panel farms, have been disproportionately located in the countryside because of the availability of suitable sites and land, and due to lack of political and economic power of affected communities to lobby against such developments. The development of these technologies in rural areas has created a new arena of contestation, which illustrates the conflicting interests that have to be considered in reaching planning decisions. On the one hand, the development of renewable energy threatens the protection of the countryside because of the scale and visibility of such schemes, the effects on wildlife, associated noise and 'flicker' effect. Such developments are perceived as an intrusion of urban values into rural areas. On the other hand, such technologies offer opportunities for sustainable rural development by re-embedding clean and locally available resources as the foundation of rural economies with community benefits. In



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addition, the effect of climate change on biodiversity and the landscape is another issue that planners involved in conservation of the countryside (such as National Parks) will begin to face, especially if National Parks are viewed as 'carbon sinks' which might encourage the re-forestation of these areas. Balancing these competing claims is one of the challenges facing rural planners as society and the economy readjusts to the mitigation and adaptation of climate change.

### **PLG508 Coastal Urban Regeneration**

#### **Engage in theoretical, practical and ethical debate at the forefront of the area of the specialism in the context of spatial planning**

This module deals with the challenges of delivering urban regeneration in coastal contexts, namely port, post-defence, seaside resorts and rural market/fishing towns. The visibility of problems in coastal towns has arguably been obscured by the government's traditional focus on urban and rural categories, yet the population of these settlements is equivalent in size to a region. The DCLG's Select Committee in 2007 recognised that, while coastal towns were not a coherent category because of their diversity, they had been neglected in government policy and were experiencing a combination of particular disadvantages such as physical isolation, often accentuated by transport deficiencies; climate change; high inward migration of elderly and transient/benefit claimant populations and the outward migration of young people; a dual housing market (premium owner occupied housing and low-quality private rental sector); 'one industry town' economies; and low education attainment with low levels of aspiration. The work of the Marine Management Organisation (2011) has done much to improve the understanding of the socio-economic circumstances and trends in coastal communities. The claim for more holistic regeneration initiatives more closely tailored to the circumstances of coastal communities is argued. These issues are assessed in Assignment 1, where students are asked to evaluate the challenges involved in the regeneration of towns and cities on the coast.

The introduction of marine planning, following the Marine and Coastal Access Act in 2009, marks a rethinking about the boundaries of traditional planning activity and the extent to which the terrestrial model of planning can be integrated with a system that is appropriate for the marine environment. The lack of a historic basis of private property rights in the marine environment presents new challenges for the introduction of interventions and makes effective consensus building and consultation essential to the effectiveness of planning implementation. There are also challenges regarding the uncertainty of data, scientific knowledge and technological change in the marine environment. This module engages with these theoretical, practical and ethical debates emerging in the new field of marine spatial planning and its integration with terrestrial planning.

#### **Evaluate the social, economic, environmental and political context for the area of specialism**

Historically, coastal areas and port cities have held strategically important locations because of their connection to the sea and inland waterways. During the twentieth century, coastal settlements experienced considerable economic, social and environmental change, which has created very location specific problems for regeneration. Port cities and their manufacturing base have been transformed by globalisation, deindustrialisation and changes in technology (including containerisation), while naval dockyards have contracted from successive defence reviews after the end of the Cold War ('peace dividend'). Even traditional seaside resorts, referred to as the least understood of Britain's 'problem' areas,



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have faced new circumstances in the face of competition from overseas package holidays as well as much more diversified range of domestic tourism products and destinations. The outcomes of these processes have very real socio-economic effects on the populations of coastal settlements, with 15 of the 20 most deprived areas in the country being located in coastal areas (IMD, 2015). The political context within regeneration is encouraged in these settlements has fluctuated between government-led initiatives, pro-market/enterprise approaches and community-led projects, although usually involves partnership working. These issues are assessed in Assignment 1, where students are asked to evaluate the challenges involved in the regeneration of towns and cities on the coast.

The module sets the broad societal context concerning the introduction of the marine planning system, which reflects a growing concern about the degradation of the marine environment and the need to manage and regulate the growing economic and social interests in the marine environment. There are a range of competing demands on the marine environment ranging from habitat conservation, sea level rise and coastal protection to pressures for public access, recreation and port/waterfront development. In addition, there is an increasing emphasis upon developing a sustainable marine economy based on expanding traditional sectors such as shipping and trade, fishing, aquaculture, telecoms cabling, oil and gas extraction, and leisure yachting, together with development of new sectors such as offshore wind and wave/tidal energy. The Marine Policy Statement defines the high level objectives for UK's marine estate as to promote a sustainable marine economy: to create a strong, healthy and just society; to live within environmental limits; to promote appropriate and effective governance structures; and to utilise science responsibly.

### **Evaluate the distinctive contribution of the specialism to the making of place and the mediation of space**

The distinctive contribution of this specialism to the making of place and the mediation of space lies in the challenges faced by communities on the coast experiencing restructuring, particularly from port and tourism change. In the case of port change, large swathes of waterfront can become available for regeneration in a short time period, providing opportunities for more comprehensively planned redevelopments, but with the challenge to integrate often peripheral locations into the fabric of the urban areas through urban design as well as addressing the environmental qualities of such sites. In resort towns, the over-reliance on domestic tourism can be difficult. Redundant tourism accommodation and attractions are often converted into less desirable uses, such as houses in multiple occupation, which require more piecemeal intervention. The importance of creating a sense of place as destination remains a fundamental challenge in the regeneration of tourism resorts. The viability and mix of activities of such large-scale redevelopment can be problematic, because of the 180° hinterlands of coastal urban morphology and undulating topographies. The risk associated with coastal development is enhanced by the action of more extreme weather conditions, including storms, erosion, flooding and increased property maintenance. These risks are likely to be accentuated by climate change over the next few decades. In many cases, there can be a clash of agendas within the coastal communities themselves, encapsulated by the need for employment and housing for the working population and the tendency towards gentrification and environmental/heritage protection for attracting inward investment and the more affluent populations within the same communities. All these agendas have implications for urban design in these coastal locations and there is an additional need for regeneration of people, in terms of education, training, skills and health, as much as physical regeneration of the built and economic environment. The role of effective partnership working thus becomes essential to the successful regeneration of the coastal communities. These issues are assessed in Assignment 1, where students are asked to evaluate the challenges involved in the regeneration of towns and cities on the coast.



**RTPI**

Royal Town Planning Institute

**Assess the contribution of the specialism to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change**

Coastal settlements will be amongst the first communities to experience the implications of climate change in terms of the frequency and extent of flooding caused by sea level rise and storm surges; higher temperatures; increased precipitation; and accelerated coastal erosion. The implications of these changes for the vulnerability of flood defences, tourism and transport infrastructure, coastal housing and static caravan sites, natural habitats and the potential physical and mental health effects are potentially severe. There might be substantial implications on land and property prices as well as increased construction, development and insurance costs. Mitigation of the causes of climate change, involving the long-term adjustment to reduce greenhouse gases through alternative energy sources, such as solar, wind and wave power, have contributions to make to the diversification of coastal economies. Adaptation involving short-term adjustments to reduce the impacts of climate change through changed behaviour, capacities and resilience need to be recognised within urban regeneration schemes on the coast. However, there is a need to improve levels of awareness and understanding of climate change as well as establish appropriate leadership, coordination and governance to implement measures that might be effective. These issues are assessed in Assignment 1 and 2, where students are asked to evaluate the challenges involved in the regeneration of towns and cities on the coast and examine the outcomes of coastal urban regeneration.

## APPENDIX III

## RTPI Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours Matrix – Degree Apprenticeship Courses

<b>Planning School</b>	<b>UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH</b>
<b>Title of course</b>	<b>MSc TOWN PLANNING (Level 7 Chartered Town Planner Degree Apprenticeship)</b>
<b>Date form completed</b>	<b>9 May, 2019</b>

Please complete the following, identifying where the **knowledge, skills and behaviours** expected of a Chartered Town Planner are met in your course. Please insert the module titles in each section, and tick the box to indicate where a module meets the knowledge, skills and behaviours, or this will be an area of training delivered in the workplace under the supervision of the employer. Please submit all relevant documentation.

Number	Knowledge statements	Core Modules					Optional Modules		Core module
		PLG501	PLG502	PLG503	PLG504	PLG505	PLG506	PLG508	
									PLG510/511
K1	<b>Planning theory, policy and practice</b>								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spatial planning in different contexts and development scales as well as planning policy at national, regional,</li> </ul>		✓				✓	✓	✓

	local and neighbourhood levels.								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The plan led system and policy frameworks, local plans and neighbourhood plans. National policy statements for major infrastructure and other published Government guidance and initiatives.</li> </ul>		✓		✓				
<b>K2</b>	<b>Planning and related law</b>								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The purpose of planning and the nature and operation of the statutory land use planning system in the UK and the administrative legal and regulatory framework within which it operates related to the built and natural environment.</li> </ul>		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The role of planning law in development</li> </ul>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

	management and the mechanisms used including planning applications, permissions, permitted development, conditions, planning agreements, enforcement and appeals. The regulatory requirements of plan making to ensure compliance with the necessary processes.								
<b>K3</b>	<b>Political framework</b>								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The political nature of spatial planning and how planners work within democratic decision making structures including levels of democracy.</li> </ul>	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The role of councillors/politicians, consultees, town and community councils, members of the public,</li> </ul>		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓

	<p>developers, voluntary and single interest groups. The various means of how interested parties can be involved in the planning process including submitting representations and the implications of challenging decisions and potential consequences.</p>								
<b>K4</b>	<b>Sustainability and resource management</b>								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable development and how to balance the needs of communities, government and business, and a range of social, economic and environmental objectives in line with environmental legislation.</li> </ul>		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The contribution that planning can make to</li> </ul>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

	the built and natural environment and the implications of climate change. How spatial planning supports efficient management of resources and use of land.								
<b>K5</b>	<b>Place-making and design</b>								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spatial design and master planning. Principles and processes for creating high quality places and enhancing the public realm for the benefit of all in society.</li> </ul>				✓	✓			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The link between place-making and health and wellbeing. The relationship between development proposals and their physical, cultural and social context, impact on amenity and the wider environment</li> </ul>		✓		✓	✓			

	including transport and movement.								
<b>K6</b>	<b>Stakeholder engagement and community involvement</b>								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Types of stakeholders including communities, consultees and statutory bodies. Importance of and reasons for engagement, principles of engagement and how to plan for and achieve effective engagement at each stage of the development process. Role of communication in planning and importance of working in an interdisciplinary context. Equality of opportunity.</li> </ul>	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
<b>K7</b>	<b>Economic framework</b>								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The economics of land and property markets</li> </ul>				✓				

	<p>and of the development process. The rationale of government intervention through planning. The implications for generating added value for the community.</p>								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development appraisal, viability and evaluation of the impact of planning decisions including planning requirements, agreements and/or conditions.</li> </ul>				✓				
<b>K8</b>	<b>Professional ethics and ethical framework</b>								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The characteristics of a professional planner and importance of upholding the highest standards of ethical behaviour and commitment to maintaining and</li> </ul>	✓							

	developing professional competence. The required standards of practice and ethics for Chartered Town Planners and the core ethical principles.								
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Number	Skills statements	Core modules					Optional modules		Core module
		PLG501	PLG502	PLG503	PLG504	PLG505	PLG506	PLG508	
									PLG510/511
S1	<b>Preparation of plans, policies and related documents</b>								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake research and analysis of information for planning policy formulation and to prepare material for policy, guidelines and advice.</li> </ul>		✓	✓					✓

<b>S2</b>	<b>Plan implementation</b>								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement policies and procedures set out in plans, legislation and related documents.</li> </ul>		✓		✓	✓			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site appraisal, feasibility studies and other forms of study preparatory to the submission of a planning application. Planning enforcement, appeals and inquiries</li> </ul>				✓				
<b>S3</b>	<b>Creative vision and design</b>								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce creative and innovative design strategies, policies and solutions.</li> </ul>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

<b>S4</b>	<b>Critical analysis and decision making</b>								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect data using appropriate systems and software, undertake investigations and research to inform quantitative and qualitative analysis and appraisal.</li> </ul>			✓			✓	✓	✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weigh evidence and evaluate alternative planning solutions. Make clear, integrated responses and evidence based decisions. Demonstrate sound judgement and the ability to balance varying objectives.</li> </ul>		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

<b>S5</b>	<b>Stakeholder management and leadership</b>								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with and manage stakeholders and customers and build positive, relationships.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate, negotiate, advocate and mediate effectively and respond appropriately to resolve conflict.</li> </ul>	✓			✓				
<b>S6</b>	<b>Project management</b>								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define clear aims and objectives for projects.</li> </ul>			✓					✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use appropriate information technology. Lead and manage a process from start to finish, deliver</li> </ul>			✓	✓				✓

	projects to time and to budget and evaluate the outcome identifying actions for improvement and development.								
<b>S7</b>	<b>Collaborative and multidisciplinary working</b>								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work in partnership.</li> </ul>	✓			✓				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network, create and maintain an environment where information is shared.</li> </ul>	✓			✓				
<b>S8</b>	<b>Interpersonal skills</b>								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate clearly in writing.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate clearly verbally. Negotiate and mediate.</li> </ul>	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work independently and as part of a team and lead others. Manage work and time. Customer and client care.</li> </ul>	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓
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Number	Behaviour statements	Core modules					Optional modules		Core module
		PLG501	PLG502	PLG503	PLG504	PLG505	PLG506	PLG508	
<b>B1</b>	<b>The five core principles of the RTPI's Code of Professional Conduct</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Honesty and integrity</li> <li>Independent professional judgement</li> <li>Due care and diligence</li> <li>Equality and respect</li> <li>Professional behaviour</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

<b>B2</b>	<b>Commitment to lifelong learning and reflective professional practice</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>B3</b>	<b>Reliability, integrity and confidentiality on work related and personal matters</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>including appropriate use of social media and information systems</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>B4</b>	<b>A focus on outcomes and positive attitude</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>B5</b>	<b>Curiosity and a desire to improve the built and natural environment</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓