



UCL

MSc Urban Development Planning



Expanding the room for manoeuvre for socially and spatially just urban development planning: confronting contemporary challenges in cities and urban areas in the Global South

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Core and Optional Modules

The City and Its Relations: Context, Institutions and Actors in Urban Development Planning; Urban Development Policy, Planning and Management: Strategic Action in Theory and Practice; Practice in Urban Development Planning; Gender in Policy and Planning; Transport Equity and Urban Mobility

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Overview The MSc Urban Development Planning (UDP) programme is designed to equip students with analytical skills and practical tools to engage reflexively with the urban development and planning challenges thrown up by rapid socio-economic, ecological and political changes in the urban global south.

The challenge of urban development planning is to respond to these processes of change, reclaiming the distributive role of the state and working with urban communities to transform cities into places where women and men of different classes, ethnic groups, religions and ages, can exercise real individual and collective choice in their lives.

By critically examining the theory and practice of development at the international, national and urban levels, the programme seeks to meet two interrelated objectives. The first is to provide participants with a grasp of the key processes generating urban change – and their localised manifestations. The second is to give participants an understanding of the diagnostic and strategic capacities necessary to respond to such changes in an equitable, participatory and sustainable manner. Central to this approach is an appreciation of the ethics of urban development planning practice and the role of the UDP practitioner.

At a time when the (differentiated) encroachment of neoliberal policy and planning is fuelling the transformation of many urban areas into increasingly unequal, fragmented and environmentally degraded spaces, this MSc programme argues that planning has an essential contribution to make in fostering more socially, spatially and environmentally just urban trajectories.

Structure The core UDP programme teaching comprises three 30-credit modules related to the programme's primary focus on urban development policy, planning and management. In addition, UDP students also complete one 30-credit optional module (or two 15-credit optional modules) and a 60-credit dissertation. Core modules provide the central theoretical, methodological and practical components of the course, whilst the optional module(s) and dissertation allow students to deepen their engagement with specific approaches/issues, in accordance with their own research interests.

The UDP programme consists of lectures, seminars, workshops, case study analysis and fieldwork in London and abroad. Students are expected to play an active part in their learning through reading, active class participation and the completion of individual and group assignments. Student performance is assessed via coursework (individual and group-based), written examination and an individual dissertation project.

Field based learning

Practical fieldwork is a key element of the UDP programme and pedagogical approach. During the year, UDP students will apply the theoretical concepts and methodological approaches learnt during the course to practical planning challenges in London and a city in the global South. In recent years, UDP fieldwork has taken place in Cairo (Egypt), Accra (Ghana), Mumbai (India), Bangkok (Thailand), Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) and Colombo (Sri Lanka).

Careers The UDP programme attracts an interdisciplinary group of students, including planners, architects, engineers, geographers, political scientists, sociologists, economists and public administrators. These diverse yet complementary perspectives support rich exchanges during class and group work, whilst also providing the building blocks for an international and multidisciplinary community of practice.

Alumni from UDP programme benefit from the international respect enjoyed by the DPU thanks to its expertise in, and contribution to, urban development and action planning globally. The programme is widely recognised by both national and international organisations such as the UN agencies and the World Bank, bilateral aid organisations, national planning and development departments, and non-governmental organisations.

Upon graduating, UDP alumni have pursued careers in the practice, teaching and research of urban development worldwide. They have done so in the public, private and community sectors – working in cities of the Global South and North and focusing on local as well as international urban development issues.