Overview

The programme is inter-disciplinary and international, drawing on research conducted at UCL and other leading research institutions, with the aim of developing a critical understanding of mega infrastructure theory and practice. It investigates the fundamental question of ‘what constitutes a successful mega infrastructure project, programme and/or plan’ in light of the fast-changing expectations that different stakeholders have of such investments.

The MSc recognises that judgments about project ‘success’ need to be examined against different contexts. With this in mind, the programme aims to arm students with insights, knowledge and skills that will assist them to better plan, appraise and deliver future mega infrastructure developments in a manner that is sensitive to the risks, uncertainties and complexities of different contexts, whether temporal, cultural or physical.

The core learning outcomes of the course include:

- Acquisition of understanding of the fundamental characteristics of mega projects, plans and programmes.
- Appreciation of challenges and trends in theories and practice of mega infrastructure planning, appraisal and delivery.
- Understanding of the contribution that such initiatives make to environmental, social, economic and institutional objectives at local, national and global scales.
- Appreciation of the policies, legislative frameworks and market contexts that surround mega infrastructure development.
- Appreciation of the diversity of stakeholders’ agendas and of interrelationships and tensions between local and national interests.
- Enhanced understanding of the critical issues concerning sustainable infrastructure investment at all scales.
- Attainment of generic skills of strategic planning and risk management disliked from other disciplines where risk, uncertainty and complexity are at the heart of their planning.
- Grounding in traditional infrastructure planning and appraisal methods and techniques including: Financial, Economic and Social Cost Benefit Analysis (CEBA), Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Social Impact Assessment (SIA).
- Introduction to innovative methods and techniques for infrastructure planning, appraisal and monitoring, including: Stakeholder and Issue Analysis and policy-led Multi Criteria Analysis (PLMCA) that facilitate the transparent trade-off between different project stakeholder priorities, aims and interests in a holistic manner.

Structure/Content

The programme comprises the following modules:

- BENVGMP2 Traditional infrastructure planning, appraisal and delivery toolbox
- BENVGMP3 Risk, uncertainty and complexity in decision-making
- BENVGMP4 Critical issues in sustainable mega infrastructure investments
- BENVGMP5 21st Century infrastructure planning, appraisal and delivery toolbox
- BENVGMP6 Sustainability visions and challenges for mega infrastructure investments
- BENVGMP7 Student group project
- BENVGPL7 Dissertation in Planning
- Elective Module (free choice but subject to approval by the Course Director)

Term 1: Oct-Dec

BENVGMP1 Mega infrastructures as agents of change
BENVGMP2 Traditional infrastructure planning, appraisal and delivery toolbox
BENVGMP3 Risk, uncertainty and complexity in decision-making

Term 2: Jan-Mar

BENVGMP4 Critical issues in sustainable mega infrastructure investments
BENVGMP5 21st Century infrastructure planning, appraisal and delivery toolbox

Term 3: Apr-May

BENVGMP7 Group project
BENVGPL7 Dissertation in Planning

Summer: Jun-Sep

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Entry Qualifications

Applicants must have obtained a minimum of a good second-class Bachelor’s degree or other qualification of equivalent standard (good second-class Bachelor’s degree or other qualification of equivalent standard (preferably 2:1 or higher, but 2:2 with appropriate experience or equivalent will also be considered). Entrants from all disciplines will be considered, with preference given to those with work experience in some aspects of mega infrastructure planning, appraisal and delivery.

A high level of competence in both spoken and written English is also required. Overseas students whose first language is not English will be asked to provide evidence of competency in English. A minimum overall IELTS score of 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in each of the sub-tests is required.

Carrers

The programme has been conceived to provide enhanced capacity-building opportunities for those currently working in the field of mega infrastructure development and offer an invaluable grounded qualification for new entrants into the field.

With strong links to industry, government and academia on a global scale, many Mega Infrastructure Planning, Appraisal and Delivery MSc students have gone on to find placements within the first year after graduation. They have taken up positions in fund management, government, international financial institutions, international cooperation agencies, investment banking, community development, academia, consulting and the construction industry. A number of graduates have been accepted to undertake PhD studies at UCL and other prestigious institutions.