

MSc/PGDip

Transport and City Planning

The MSc in Transport and City Planning provides a social science-based perspective on transport planning, drawing on the latest thinking and debates in transport, urban planning and mega infrastructure project development, as part of the development of the sustainable city.



Overview

The MSc in Transport and City Planning (TCP) provides a ground-breaking, critical and social science-based perspective on transport planning. The programme examines the urban and international context, considering the development of transport planning, in theory and practice. The focus spatially is at the city scale – recognising that more than half of humankind lives in urban areas – and that the city is often where progressive policy-making occurs.

The programme draws on the latest thinking and debates in transport and urban planning, providing an inter-disciplinary consideration of transport planning as part of the development of the sustainable city. Transport is often seen as the ‘maker and breaker’ of cities, yet few, if any, governments in the Global North and Global South have managed to develop transport systems that consistently support attractive city living, both in the urban core and at the suburban edge. The quality of transport systems needs to be judged against several benchmarks – as part of the solution to climate change and the wider environmental challenges that society faces; as a catalyst to the economy and city competitiveness, as a contributor to well-being and quality of life; and delivered in a way that contributes to social justice. These are huge challenges for our future transport and city planners and require new approaches in transport and urban planning.

The aim of the MSc is to equip students to work effectively as transport and planning practitioners, moving beyond the ‘disciplinary silos’ usually found in academia and practice. A key feature of the MSc is its integrative design across disciplines, developing a range of different theories and perspectives, with modules linked by common principles. There are three core themes: (1) urban transport planning, (2) sustainable cities and (3) investing in mega projects.

Structure/Content

The MSc is taken as a one-year full-time or two- to five-year modular/flexible programme. It offers a theory and practice-driven approach which gives students both a conceptual understanding and the skills needed to tackle practical problems, covering the stages of strategy development, analysis and implementation, complex decision-making and project management, and the role of transport in place-making. There are close linkages and shared modules with two other Bartlett School of Planning courses: the MSc in Sustainable Urbanism and MSc in Infrastructure Planning, Appraisal and Development. Core themes are as below:

Urban Transport Planning: examines the role and nature of transport planning as part of the delivery of sustainable cities internationally. The context and rationale for transport is explored. *Modules: (1) BPLN0060 Transport Planning and the City; and (2) BPLN0061 International Case Studies in Transport and City Planning.*

Sustainable Cities: introduces some of the key sustainability debates and literature, developing an understanding of the tensions and synergies between environmental, social and economic objectives. *Modules: (1) BPLN0058 Sustainable Urban Development: Key Themes; and (2) BPLN0059 Sustainable Urban Development Group Project.*

Investing in Mega Projects: provides a critical review of infrastructure theory, decision-making and international practice. *Modules: (1) BPLN0024 Infrastructures as Agents of Change; and (2) BPLN0027 Critical Issues in Infrastructure Funding, Financing & Investment or BPLN0029 Sustainability and Major Infrastructure Investments.*

Beyond these core studies, students take 30 more credits (two 15 credit modules) from related areas across the Faculty, such as GIS, data analysis and visualisation via the Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis (CASA); urban planning with The Bartlett School of Planning

(BSP); international planning and development with the Development Planning Unit (DPU); and quantitative transport analysis with the UCL Centre for Transport Studies (CTS); or indeed wider electives from other departments at UCL.

Field Trip

An international field trip of 4-5 days is arranged to selected best practice case study developments in continental Europe. This enables students to explore the way that different contexts – including cultural, political and institutional issues – frame and deliver transport and city planning. Recent destinations have included Freiburg, Tübingen and Stuttgart. The field trip is informed by talks from key experts. There are separate local study trips around London and Oxford or Cambridge, including talks with local experts and the city authorities.

Entry Qualifications

Applicants must have obtained a minimum of a 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 an academic background and/or professional experience in Urban Planning, Geography, Engineering, Transport Planning, or related disciplines. 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. For information about the Rees Jeffreys Road Fund MSc transport bursaries programme please see page 33.

Careers

The programme is attractive to candidates who wish to work across disciplines and at the strategic policy development levels; with Urban Planning, Geography, Transport Planning or Engineering graduates, or wider specialists, who see their future work in transport planning as part of the design of sustainable cities.

Graduate students from The Bartlett School of Planning have been very successful in gaining subsequent employment. At present there is a growing demand for our postgraduates from a wide range of both private and public employers, within the transport planning or urban planning professions. Students have gone on to work within international consultancy (we have close links and have worked with many of these, such as Arup, AECOM, CH2M, Atkins, Alan Baxter & Associates); European and central governments; TfL and GLA; TfGM; and indeed metropolitan and city authorities internationally; international investment banks such as the ADB, World Bank, European Investment Bank; civil society and wider lobby groups.

Term 1 Oct-Dec	Term 2 Jan-Mar	Term 3 Apr-May	Summer Jun-Sep
BPLN0060 Transport Planning and the City	BPLN0059 Sustainable Urban Development: Project	BPLN0039 Dissertation in Planning	(PT yr 2)
BPLN0058 Sustainable Urban Development: Key Themes	BPLN0061 International Case Studies in Transport and City Planning		
BPLN0024 Infrastructures as Agents of Change	BPLN0027 or BPLN0029 Critical Issues in Infrastructure Investments		
Elective A (Chosen in the first week of term one)	Elective B (Chosen in the first week of term one)		