

Programme Specification

1	Awarding body	University of London				
2	Teaching Institution	Birkbeck College				
3	Programme Title(s)	MA/MSc Cities				
4	Programme Code(s)	TMMCITES_C				
5	UCAS code	N/A				
6	Home Department	Geography				
7	Exit Award(s)	MA or MSc Cities PG Dip PG Cert				
8	Duration of Study (number of years)	1 FT or 2 PT				
9	Mode of Study	FT	X	PT	X	DL
10	Level of Award (FHEQ)	7				
11	Other teaching depts or institution	Arts: Cultures and Languages; English & Humanities; Film, Media and Cultural Studies; History of Art; SSHP: ALC; Geography; History; Psychosocial Studies				
12	Professional, Statutory Regulatory Body(PSRB) details	N/A				
13	QAA Benchmark Statement	N/A				

14	Programme Rationale & Aims
	<p>Urbanisation and its impacts are critical challenges of the 21st Century impacting on the way of life and livelihoods of more than half the population of the planet. The aim of this new programme is to respond to the need for complex and interdisciplinary approaches to understanding the city and urbanisation, uniquely bringing together the strengths of urban research and teaching in Birkbeck's schools of Arts and SSHP. This combined approach will give BBK visibility and a competitive advantage in the field of Urban Studies programmes in the London, and UK, HE market as there is currently a gap in terms of addressing urban studies through arts and social science (the focus of most existing programmes in competitor institutions being on urban policy, governance, planning and architecture).</p> <p>In bringing together the specialisms of cities teaching and research across the schools of Arts and SSHP, this programme aims to provide students with a variety of disciplinary and theoretical approaches to understanding cities, extending from the ancient to the contemporary, political to cultural, the aesthetic to geographical. After completing a core module, students will be able to choose modules according to their interest in a particular discipline, including: cultural studies, visual studies, linguistics, comparative literatures and cultures, history, geography, incorporating a range of political perspectives and as well as historical periods. It is structured in a way which is responsive and adaptable to the</p>

	<p>interests of students, tapping into our multiple areas of expertise to offer research-led teaching in a variety of formats including seminars and field trips.</p> <p>Through engaging with high-quality teaching and skills development embedded in the programme, students will be able to enhance employability, including : analysing the latest research on governance, sustainability, design, socio-economics, policy, practices and cultures of cities; ability to research, apprehend and articulate an understanding of wider contexts, long term implications and historical influences related to the city and urbanisation; the capacity to design and deliver independent research including a critical analysis of a variety of sources of data; consideration of multiple perspectives in a debate, and challenging assumptions and beliefs; understanding dynamics of cultural diversity, including being able to work within culturally diverse and multilingual spaces and situations; understanding the consequences of human intervention in urban spaces, including urban design and environmental impacts; capacity to recognize the importance of ethical issues in research and policy; recognition and application of the contributions of urban research to civil society.</p> <p>These skills are a necessary attribute for students seeking employment, or already employed, in local and national government, urban planning, housing NGOs and community organisations, civil service and private sector consultancies, and international NGOs working on issues of habitat and urban redevelopment. Finally, the programme provides excellent preparation for those whose ultimate goal is to pursue a PhD in cities as an interdisciplinary field.</p>
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15	Entry Criteria
	Minimum 2:2 in an undergraduate or equivalent cognate field of study. Other fields will be considered at the discretion of the programme director.

16	Learning Outcomes
	<p>Subject Specific:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. demonstrate advanced knowledge of theoretical frameworks within urban studies in the Arts and Social Sciences; 2. demonstrate an understanding of these theories through their application to particular urban contexts or questions; 3. understand and work with concepts relevant to the study of cities; 4. demonstrate detailed knowledge of specific, paradigmatic dimensions of cities; 5. demonstrate an understanding of what it means to study cities from an interdisciplinary perspective. <p>Intellectual:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. demonstrate skills of critical understanding, analysis and reasoning; 7. evaluate and assess arguments and debates; 8. consider and solve complex problems; 9. formulate a coherent argument both orally and in written form. <p>Practical:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. develop research skills including the ability to manage an independent research project; 11. develop the use of IT skills;

	<p>12. develop the ability to independently use the library and internet research resources; 13. develop the ability to critically evaluate documents and evidence from a variety of sources and artefacts, such as academic, archival, policy, visual, ethnographic and digital; 14. demonstrate essay writing skills, including referencing and creating a bibliography.</p> <p>Personal and Social: 16. demonstrate communication skills and the ability to work with others in a research capacity; 17. the capacity to work independently; 18. demonstrate self-awareness and critical reflection; 19. show planning and organizational skills; 20. demonstrate continuous learning skills; 21. demonstrate presentation skills; 22. demonstrate intercultural competence and the ability to work with others from different cultural backgrounds.</p>
17	<p>Learning, teaching and assessment methods</p>
	<p>Most teaching will take place in small teacher-led seminar groups which promote active student participation. As well as allowing students to gain subject specific knowledge, both the core and option modules will encourage the development of research and study skills such as critical thinking, analysis, reasoning and the ability to consider and solve complex problems. The second part of each lecture in the core module ('Understanding the City') will be dedicated to introducing students to a range of research methods (e.g. ethnography, textual and visual analysis, GIS) and study skills (including dissertation preparation, library and database facilities, referencing, communicating research in alternative formats e.g. blogs). Option modules also include field trips as a form of teaching, developing research methods and skills in the field.</p> <p>Assessment for the core module and all options is primarily course work in diverse formats including academic essays, literature reviews, annotated bibliographies, field work reports, methods case studies, and blogs.</p>
18	<p>Programme Description</p>
	<p>This programme allows students to explore the city from a variety of perspectives while developing a theoretical grounding and skills development for postgraduate level study. Students will take a compulsory 30 credit module ('<i>Understanding the City</i>') with the teaching of research methods and study skills embedded in the second half of each week's lecture. They can then choose to focus on a pathway of their interest, choosing three modules from an array of options from across the schools of Arts and SSHP. Finally, they will complete a 60-credit dissertation (12000-15000 words).</p> <p>Indicative options include:</p> <p>Cultures and Languages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LNLN057S7: Cities and Cultures • LNLN041S7: The City in German Literature since 1848 • LNLN030S7: Urban Spaces in Modern Cultures • ARIB137S7: Early Cinema and Modernity in Brazil

English and Humanities:

- AREN043S7: Victorian London
- ENHU081S7: The Literature of Elizabethan London
- ENHU105S7: Reading Walter Benjamin's Arcades project

FMACS:

- ARMC050S7: Arts Management and Urban Development
- ARVC001S7: Film Festivals (with Berlin Field Trip)

Geography:

- SSGE080S7: Cities and Urban Inequalities
- SSGE079S7: Contesting Culture
- SSGE062S7: Critical Social Geographies
- SSGE086S7: Delhi field trip (Research Applications in the Field)

History:

- SSHC392S7: Venice and Istanbul, 1453–1797
- SSHC385S7 :Between Words and Walls: Material and Textual Approaches to Ancient Housing
- Georgian London: transport, Infrastructure and the transformation of urban space, c.1660-1830 (Berlin)
- SSHC389S7: Historians at Large – Public History in Practice
- HICL099S7: Power and Communication in Medieval and Early Modern Europe
- SSHC397S7: Mapping the Middle Ages
- SSHC309S7: The Politics of Culture in Neronian Rome
- Sex and the City (Victorian London)
- Queer Histories, Queer Cultures
- HICL046S7: Early Modern London
- HICL033S7: Death, Disease and the Early Modern City
- HICL211S7: Renaissance Florence: Society, Religion, Culture
- HICL101S7: Practitioners and Patients in Renaissance and Early Modern Europe
- SSHC482S7: Repertoires of Resistance: Protest and Rebellion from the Russian Revolution to the Hong Kong Umbrella Movement
- HICL203S7: London and Berlin in the Age of Empire
- SSHC474S7: European Crises in the Mediterranean, 1880s to the Present

History of Art:

- AHVM053S7: Gender, Modernity and the City
- ARVC114S7: Space and Politics of Modernity
- ARVC230S7: Architecture and Modernity in Britain and its Empire
- AHVM064S7: Curating Difficult Histories
- AHVM084S7: Rome: Place, Continuity and Memory
- AHVM074S7: Architecture and Spectacle in Late Medieval Europe

With permission from the programme director, students will also be able to take a cognate module outside Arts/SSHP (e.g. Law).

19 Programme Structure				
Full Time programme				
Year 1				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
7	SSGE105S7	Understanding the City	30	Core
7		Option 1`	30	Option
7		Option 2	30	Option
7		Option 3	30	Option
7	SSGE083Z7	Research Methods	0	Compulsory
7	SSGE106D7	Dissertation MA/MSc Cities	60	Core
Part Time programme				
Year 1				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
7	SSGE105S7	Understanding the City	30	Core
7		Option 1	30	Option
Year 2				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
7		Option 2	30	Option
7		Option 3	30	Option
7	SSGE083Z7	Research Methods	0	Compulsory
7	SSGE106D7	Dissertation MA/MSc Cities	60	Core

Status*

CORE – Module must be taken and passed by student; COMPULSORY – Module must be taken, mark can be reviewed at sub-exam board; OPTIONAL – Student can choose to take this module

20 Additional Programme-Specific Information	
Award of MA or MSc	
<p>In order to be awarded an MSc, a student will have to take, at least, one 30-credit module belonging to one of the Social Sciences departments (see table below), plus write a dissertation (60 credits) supervised in a Social Sciences department</p> <p>In order to be awarded an MA, a student will have to take, at least, one 30-credit module belonging to one of the Arts and Humanities departments (see table below), plus write a dissertation (60 credits) supervised in an Arts and Humanities department.</p>	
ARTS AND HUMANITIES, MA modules*/departments	SOCIAL SCIENCES, MSc modules*/departments
English	Geography
History of Art	Politics
Film Media and Cultural Studies	Psychosocial Studies
Cultures and Languages	
History	
Applied Linguistics	

Year of entry: 2022/23



	*NB: Some crossover may be possible, depending on the nature of certain modules, as determined by the exam sub-board.
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21	Programme Director	Dr Mara Nogueira, Geography
22	Start Date (<i>term/year</i>)	Autumn 2020
23	Date approved by Education Committee	Autumn 2019
24	Date approved by Academic Board	Autumn 2019
25	Date(s) updated/amended	6 August 2021