



## Programme Specification

A statement of the knowledge, understanding and skills that underpin a taught programme of study leading to an award from  
The University of Sheffield

1	<b>Programme Title</b>	Real Estate Planning and Development
2	<b>Programme Code</b>	GPLT007
3	<b>JACS Code</b>	K400
4	<b>Level of Study</b>	Postgraduate
5a	<b>Final Qualification</b>	Master of Science (MSc)
5b	<b>QAA FHEQ Level</b>	Masters
6	<b>Intermediate Qualifications</b>	Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert), Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)
7	<b>Teaching Institution</b> (if not Sheffield)	Not applicable
8	<b>Faculty</b>	Social Sciences
9	<b>Department</b>	Urban Studies and Planning
10	<b>Other Departments involved in teaching the programme</b>	Not applicable
11	<b>Mode of Attendance</b>	Full-time
12	<b>Duration of the Programme</b>	1 year
13	<b>Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body</b>	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
14	<b>Date of production/revision</b>	March 2016, March 2019, February 2020, January 2022, December 2022, March 2026

### 15. Background to the programme and subject area

The MSc in Real Estate Planning and Development is an established programme professionally accredited under RICS's 'Planning and Development' pathway. The programme combines spatial planning and regeneration with real estate valuation and management, focusing on the integrated, economic, social and environmental development of the built environment. It is aimed at students from a wide range of backgrounds who wish to specialise in this important and growing area. The programme responds to a significant demand for graduates capable of working at the intersections between real estate and spatial planning, an area where the department has particular research strengths.

Real estate, along with labour and capital, is a basic factor of production of firms in the national and global economy. It is one of a company's main assets and costs. Commercial buildings have major aesthetic and physical impacts on the urban built environment and perform significant roles in social, economic and political life. Real estate and its planning, development and management have become increasingly complex. A large and growing proportion of commercial real estate is rented, so many buildings must simultaneously satisfy the functional needs of the occupier (the property user) and the financial requirements of the owner (the property investor) as well as fitting into wider planning contexts. The scale, scope and sophistication of the real estate market present challenges for professionals seeking to manage change in the built environment, including both surveyors and planners. This has led to an increasing demand for graduates with knowledge and skills at the intersections of real estate and spatial planning who have the ability to work as part of interdisciplinary teams to achieve efficient, effective and sustainable outcomes that contribute to wider place-making objectives.

Successful completion of the MSc Real Estate Planning and Development allows the graduate professional level entry into a career in real estate, planning or a related area within both the private and public sectors. The programme draws on the Department's standing as an international centre of research and teaching excellence. It puts a premium on the development of intellectual curiosity, critical thinking and independent judgement. It emphasises theoretical and analytical rigour. Professional practice is not about routinely applying rules to standard situations. It is concerned with fitting action to circumstances and requires an ability to recognise and deal with competing viewpoints and differing value systems. The programme aims to bring theoretical insights to

bear on practical problems. All staff are research active, so all elements of the programme are informed by leading edge thinking.

The programme establishes a foundation of knowledge (about real estate, planning, the economy and professionalism) and skills (of research and analysis). Students then develop and integrate these, before pursuing specialist, independent study. The latter, in particular, is supported by the research interests of the academic staff in the Department, which include a wide range of specialisms across the fields of spatial planning, real estate development and investment, real estate market analysis, and urban and regional economics. Data gathering and project work are important elements of the programmes. There is also a focus on learning group work skills and the opportunity for active, inter-professional study. Coursework assessment predominates over formal examinations.

Our graduates are much sought after by employers because of their high quality and we have an excellent employment record. A wide range of careers in real estate, planning and applied economics is open to graduates.

Further information on the course may be obtained from our web site at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/usp>.

## **16. Programme aims**

The aims of the MSc in Real Estate Planning and Development reflect the overall teaching and learning aims of the Department.

1. To use teaching informed by research to provide a stimulating culture of learning, enthusiasm for the subject and opportunities for students to develop research skills.
2. To educate able and well-motivated students from a wide range of backgrounds.
3. To support students in developing intellectual curiosity, critical thinking and independent judgement.
4. To prepare students for professional practice by offering a programme of study which meets accreditation requirements and which provides teaching informed by professional experience.
5. To maximise student employability by progressively developing competencies in a wide range of transferable and professional skills.
6. To instil an appreciation of the diversity of cultures and values in society and develop a commitment to self-improvement and the development of life skills.
7. To emphasise informed applicant choice and equal opportunities in the admission process.
8. To provide a supportive environment for students and to involve them in quality assurance.

More specifically, the MSc Real Estate Planning and Development has the following additional aims.

9. To provide students with education and training in planning and development informed by research-led teaching.
10. To develop students' understanding of the nature of real estate and of planning and development practice, including their institutional and legal frameworks.
11. To develop students' understanding of the different contexts relevant to planning and development practice, including the economic and political environments in which surveyors work.
12. To provide students with research skills, the ability to analyse and synthesise knowledge and an understanding of the role of research in planning and development practice.
13. To develop the skills needed to analyse complex planning and development problems, recommend appropriate courses of action, take decisions and communicate effectively with clients and other audiences.
14. To develop through specialised studies a deeper knowledge of a selected aspect or aspects of planning and development.

## 17. Programme learning outcomes

<b>Knowledge and understanding:</b>	
Students achieving the award of either PG Dip or Masters' will have developed high level knowledge and understanding of:	
<b>K1</b>	The character of the real estate market, its role in the wider economy and intersection with spatial planning and place-making.
<b>K2</b>	Foundational knowledge on real estate planning and development practice and the economics of real estate
<b>K3</b>	The legal, policy and institutional influences that shape spatial development, real estate and planning.
<b>K4</b>	The role and importance of finance in real estate.
<b>K5</b>	The valuation of interests in real estate for specific purposes.
<b>K6</b>	The real estate development process and its intersections with planning, urban -design and place-making.
<b>K7</b>	The moral and ethical dimensions of professional practice in planning and real estate.
<b>K8</b>	The role of spatial planning in shaping real estate markets and built environment outcomes.
<b>K9</b>	A specialised area of planning and development, consistent with the research interests of the Department.
<b>K10</b>	The importance of promoting efficient, effective and sustainable use of resources in planning and real estate.
<b>K11</b>	The value of research as applied to planning and surveying practice.
<b>In addition, students achieving the award of Masters' will have developed further knowledge and understanding of:</b>	
<b>K12</b>	A specific aspect of planning and development.
Students achieving the award of <b>PG Cert</b> will have developed high level knowledge and understanding defined by that combination of K1 – K10 above matching the open selection of modules to the value of 60 credits to which they relate.	

<b>Skills and other attributes - Students achieving the award of either PG Dip or Masters' will have developed the following to a high degree:</b>	
<b>S1</b>	The ability to relate and to synthesise areas of knowledge, understanding and skills within a real estate and planning framework.
<b>S2</b>	The ability to apply theoretical and practical knowledge, understanding and skills to meet the demands of professional practice.
<b>S3</b>	The ability to interpret, adapt and apply decision-making and problem-solving techniques in real estate and planning to specific circumstances.
<b>S4</b>	The ability to think creatively and holistically, and to pursue this approach in a real estate and planning context.
<b>S5</b>	The ability to undertake effective academic research, to develop critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, including: understanding of appropriate methodologies for different research requirements; the ability to collect, analyse, organise and evaluate information; and, the ability to apply the knowledge generated to real estate and planning problems in a creative way.
<b>S6</b>	The ability to apply the skills necessary for effective professional practice, including the identification of client requirements, design appraisal and the exercise of negotiation, facilitation and mediation skills and of self-management skills.
<b>S7</b>	The ability to use information and communication technologies to assist in research, planning and real estate processes.
<b>S8</b>	The ability to apply moral and ethical criteria in practice and respect for professional ethics.
<b>S9</b>	The ability to communicate effectively verbally, graphically and by electronic means.
<b>S10</b>	The ability to relate to and work with people from different professional and other backgrounds and to work individually and in teams, including the exercise of leadership.

<b>In addition, students achieving the award of Masters' will have developed:</b>	
<b>S11</b>	The ability to develop a proposal for in-depth research which reflects an understanding of a problem and its theoretical and empirical context.
<b>S12</b>	The ability to conduct independent in-depth research into a specific aspect of planning and development.
Students achieving the award of <b>PG Cert</b> will have developed to a high degree the skills and attributes defined by that combination of S1 – S10 matching the open selection of modules to the value of 60 credits to which they relate.	

## 18. Teaching, learning and assessment

### **Development of the learning outcomes is promoted through the following teaching and learning methods:**

A wide variety of teaching and learning methods is employed to achieve the learning outcomes. The approach is developmental and there is an increasing emphasis upon student-centred learning as the year progresses. The latter stages of the programme give particular emphasis to the acquisition of specialised knowledge and of high-level research skills. More generally, the following teaching and learning methods are employed, which relate particularly, but not exclusively, to the teaching and learning outcomes specified below.

**Lectures** are used to impart fundamental knowledge. They provide the foundation on which more reflective teaching and learning is built. They contribute primarily to the development of knowledge (K1-K11).

**Tutorials** accompany lectures. They provide a forum in which the ideas, concepts and knowledge introduced in the lectures are discussed and examined, deepening the student's understanding of a topic (K1-K11).

**Seminars** allow students to develop their communication and collaborative skills (S9 and S10). The specialised option modules are almost exclusively taught through seminars led by students, which are, therefore, crucial to the achievement of learning outcome K8.

**Projects** enable the student to work collaboratively to examine an issue in depth (K1-K11), often incorporating fieldwork in which the student is brought into contact with practitioners or members of the public (S10), and requiring data collection (S5), and the synthesis, adaptation and application of knowledge from different parts of the curriculum (S1-S4). In addition, projects encourage the student to develop research skills (S5) and to improve their practice, leadership, group working and presentation skills (S6-S10).

**Workshops and practical sessions** are also used particularly in relation to applied real estate valuation and (K11; S5 and S7), decision-making techniques (K4-K6 and K10; S3) and information management (S7).

**Group Work** forms an important part of the learning experience for students and underpins the development of skills in team working, collaboration, negotiation and leadership (S6 and S10).

**Independent study** is encouraged and supported throughout the programme. Within core modules there is considerable flexibility for students to identify topics that particularly interest them. Students are free to choose a specialised study option module in consultation with their dissertation supervisors and much work on that option is undertaken as independent study. Finally, the dissertation is a major piece of work that students must conduct on their own initiative, with guidance from supervisors (K11 and K12; S9, S11 and S12).

**Site visits** and data gathering may be undertaken in connection with both core and option modules and contribute particularly to the achievement of learning outcomes K1, K3, K5 and K10 and the acquisition of skills S2-S4.

### **Opportunities to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes are provided through the following assessment methods:**

Continuous assessment predominates on the MSc Real Estate Planning and Development and a wide range of methods is employed.

**Essays and papers** are used in some modules. Essays test basic comprehension of substantive knowledge (K1-4, K6 and K7). Papers allow the demonstration of more developed knowledge and understanding of selected issues (K8). Both are important vehicles for developing advanced writing skills (S9).

**Project reports** are a major way of testing students' skills in synthesising and applying knowledge to given situations (S1-S4) and in developing the forms of written communication which are essential for professional life

(S6 and S9). While much project work is done by teams, the programme is carefully designed to ensure that the majority of assessment is individually based and that clear limits are placed on the extent to which students are assessed collectively. Project reports are used widely and vary from specific tasks related to particular decision-making techniques (K4-K6), to more holistic pieces of work (K11; S5), to major, integrative exercises in inter-professional practice (S1-S10).

**Oral and visual presentation** forms an important part of the assessment strategy of the Department (S9). All students will have the opportunity to make seminar presentations, to present findings from project work and to lead debates on real estate topics.

**The dissertation** is the most important single assessment. It presents the opportunity for students to develop high-level research skills (S5, S9, S11, S12) and to apply them to the in-depth study of a specialist topic (K12).

## 19. Reference points

**The learning outcomes have been developed to reflect the following points of reference:**

### a) From external professional and academic institutions:

- The overall level and quantum of elements of the programme meets the requirements specified in the Quality Assurance Authority for Higher Education (QAAHE) Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, 2008 with regard to postgraduate diplomas and Masters degrees;
- The nature and characteristics of the programme and the attributes and capabilities of its graduates meet the standards of the QAAHE Benchmark Statement for Building and Surveying, 2002 – extending and applying them to postgraduate study and the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Town and Country Planning (2015);
- The programme complies with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Global Accreditation Policy and Process (2019) and with the RICS Requirements and Competencies Guide (2018) to provide a professionally accredited qualification related to the Planning and Development pathway.

### b) From the Department's internal processes and procedures:

- The Department's Statement of Educational Philosophy, which emphasises the contested nature of knowledge and the consequent need for critical rigour in teaching, learning and research;
- The RICS / University of Sheffield Partnership supports the distinctive emphasis the programme places on philosophy, theory, ethics, research and analysis;
- Past reports from external examiners reinforce our overall approach along with the Department's external Liaison Committee consisting of professional practitioners, academics, staff and students.

## 20. Programme structure and regulations

The programme structure is modular. Students study modules worth 60 credits in each of the two semesters and a further 60 credits over the summer, giving a total of 180 credits. In the first semester, students take four compulsory modules, each of 15 credits. These provide core and contextual subject coverage and key skills. In the second semester, knowledge, understanding and skills are further developed and interpreted, synthesised and applied through three 15 credits modules of compulsory study. In addition, students must choose one specialised study option module of 15 credits in consultation with their personal tutors. The summer period is entirely devoted to the completion of a 60-credit dissertation on a subject identified by the student.

Students successfully completing 60 credits are eligible for the award of the PG Cert in Real Estate Planning and Development (non-accredited); those successfully completing 120 credits are eligible for the award of the PG Dip in Real Estate Planning and Development (non-accredited). Students successfully completing 180 credits are eligible for the award of the MSc in Real Estate Planning and Development (professionally accredited).

Detailed information about the structure of programmes, regulations concerning assessment and progression and descriptions of individual modules are published in the University Calendar available on-line at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/calendar/>.

## 21. Student development over the course of study

**In Semester 1, core and contextual knowledge and understanding are covered and key skills are developed.**

Students establish a strong knowledge and skills base that serves as a foundation for the development of advanced understanding and abilities. Core concepts - such as the economic characteristics of real estate, the operation of spatial planning systems or the nature of professions - are related to contextual influences – such as the wider economy, changes in governance structures and shifts in professional legitimacy. Key research skills and techniques, both quantitative and qualitative, are applied to real estate and planning problems. These skills are widened and strengthened by the assessments. While essays and papers form the bulk of tasks, project reports are required.

**In Semester 2, knowledge, understanding and skills are further developed and are interpreted, synthesised and applied.**

Students develop further specialist knowledge of real estate development, the urban design process and planning law and apply it to real world problems. This requires not only the integration of subjects specific to the programme but their application in relation to other (professional) analyses and perspectives (including design and investment). Spring semester teaching incorporates the full range of learning methods but gives increasing emphasis to student-centred activity within a supportive framework. Specialist knowledge is developed and independent action is reinforced through the study of one option module.

During the summer period, high level research skills are developed and applied to achieve in-depth, specialist knowledge.

The semester is entirely devoted to the dissertation. Working independently, with the support and advice of individual supervisors, students design and undertake a substantial research project and write up the results. In doing so, they acquire high level research, writing and other skills and knowledge and understanding of a particular real estate topic.

## 22. Criteria for admission to the programme

All applications are treated individually but the normal entry requirement is a good honours degree or evidence of equivalent achievement; for example, a professional qualification combined with work experience. In practice, the minimum requirement is a 2:1 honours degree, with most students admitted to postgraduate programmes in the Department having 2:1 or 1st class degrees. Qualifications can be in a cognate, semi-cognate or non-cognate subject, with the MSc giving students the opportunity to convert to a specialist surveying discipline at Masters' level.

The Department is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity in the application process and wishes to ensure a diversity of students on its courses. It therefore particularly welcomes applications from people from non-standard academic backgrounds, from people with relevant employment experience, from minority ethnic students, from women and from disabled students.

Detailed information regarding admission to the programme is available in the postgraduate brochure for the Department, which is available on-line at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/usp>

## 23. Additional information

The programme is fully accredited by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.

This specification represents a concise statement about the main features of the programme and should be considered alongside other sources of information provided by the teaching department(s) and the University. In addition to programme specific information, further information about studying at The University of Sheffield can be accessed via our Student Services web site at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid>.