



UNIVERSITY COLLEGE  
OF ESTATE MANAGEMENT

# **MSc Innovation in Sustainable Built Environments**

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Programme Specification 2025-2026

Version: 7.00

Status: Final

Date: 19/05/2025

MSc Innovation in Sustainable Built Environments  
Programme Specification

## Summary Programme Details

### Final Award

**Award:** MSc

**Title of (final) Programme (non-apprentices):** Innovation in Sustainable Built Environments

**Title of (final) Programme (apprentices):** Sustainability

**Credit points:** 180

**Level of award:** 7

### Intermediate award(s)\*

**Intermediate award 1:** Postgraduate Diploma Innovation in Sustainable Built Environments

**Credit points:** 120

**Level of award:** 7

**Intermediate award 2:** Postgraduate Certificate Sustainable Building and Property Studies

**Credit points:** 60

**Level of award:** 7

\*Intermediate awards will be granted to students that exit the programme part way through if they have achieved sufficient credits in line with the [Academic and Programme Regulations \(opens new window\)](#).

### Apprenticeship Standard and Assessment Plan (relevant to apprentices only)

**Name of apprenticeship standard:** Sustainability Business Specialist

**Reference number:** ST0748

**End Point Assessment:** Integrated

**End Point Assessment Organisation:** UCEM

**Link to apprenticeship standard:** [Sustainability business specialist \(integrated degree\)](#)

**Link to assessment plan:** [Sustainability business specialist \(integrated degree\) assessment plan](#)

### Validation

**Validating institution:** University College of Estate Management (UCEM)

**Date of last validation:** February 2023

**Date of next periodic review:** February 2028

**Date of commencement of first delivery:** September 2023 non-apprenticeship programme  
September 2024 apprenticeship programme.

**Duration:** 2 years

**Maximum period of registration:** In accordance with the [Academic and Programme Regulations \(opens new window\)](#)

**UCAS Code/ HECoS Code:** N/A / 100150

**Programming Code:** PMSCESES

**Other coding as required:** N/A

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## Professional accreditation / recognition

Accrediting/recongnising body: **Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)**

Details of the accreditation/recognition: The MSc Innovation in Sustainable Built Environments and Sustainability Business Specialist Apprenticeship (academic award title: MSc Sustainability) are accredited by IEMA.

Date of last programme accreditation/recognition: June 2024

Date of next periodic review: 2027

## QAA Guidance

[UK Quality Code for Higher Education \(opens new window\)](#)

[The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies \(opens new window\)](#)

[Quality Assurance Agency \(QAA\) Subject Benchmark Statement: Land, Construction, Real Estate and Surveying April 2024 \(opens new window\)](#)

## OfS Standards

[Office for Students \(OfS\) Sector Recognised Standards \(opens a new window\)](#)

## Programme Overview

### Rationale

The MSc Innovation in Sustainable Built Environments programme sits within the University College of Estate Management's (UCEM's) broader long term sustainability strategy.

The title of the programme has been carefully considered. The word 'innovation' was chosen to reflect the need for UCEM, and the educational materials to be drawn upon, to be innovative and for students to embrace new and alternative thinking. Being innovative in all aspects of sustainability brings about change, from management, leadership, and organisational approaches right through to the materials, processes, technologies, and regulations.

This programme has been designed to reflect high-level sector needs both now and in the future. The main target audience for the programme are practitioners in the sector, holding a position of authority or seeking to do so, and already holding a built environment degree. They may be Chartered but looking for additional knowledge and a fresh critical perspective on sustainability in the built environment, or they may have knowledge of sustainability and be seeking to apply this within the broad built environment context. The programme has been designed for students to progress through four distinct phases which will build their knowledge as they progress through the programme.

This academic programme also serves students studying as apprentices on the Sustainability Business Specialist Apprenticeship Programme.

### Entry Requirements

Entrants to this programme normally are required to have attained one of the following:

- a Bachelor's Degree with honours at upper second standard (2:1) as a minimum, or equivalent;

Or

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- a Bachelor's degree with honours at lower second standard (2:2) as a minimum, or equivalent and be employed in a relevant role;  
Or
- a Bachelor's Degree, or equivalent, plus three years' experience in a relevant field;  
Or
- a Level 5 qualification as defined by Framework for Higher Education Qualifications for England, Wales, and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) plus 5 years' relevant experience;  
Or
- a professional qualification plus 5 years' relevant experience, two of which should be at senior management level;

All applicants will be required to provide a detailed personal statement and a reference or letter of support from an employer or mentor to support the application. An interview with a member of the programme team will also be required prior to acceptance onto the course.

If an applicant does not meet the standard entry requirements UCEM will consider the application on an individual basis. In these cases, the application will be assessed by the Programme Leader or for students in Hong Kong by the Dean of School (International), who will give careful consideration to any professional and life experiences as well as any academic or vocational qualifications the applicant may hold. The applicant may be asked to provide a detailed personal statement and/or a reference or letter of support from an employer or mentor to support the application.

Applications are assessed in accordance with the UCEM [Code of Practice: Admissions and Recognition of Prior Learning \(opens new window\)](#).

### English language requirements

All UCEM programmes are taught and assessed in English. The applicant will therefore be required to demonstrate adequate proficiency in the language before being admitted to a course:

- GCSE Grade 4 (or C) or above in English Language or English Literature, or an equivalent qualification. For further information on equivalent qualifications please contact: [admissions@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@ucem.ac.uk)
- Grade 6.0 or above, with at least 6.0 in the reading and writing modules, in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) academic test administered by the British Council.
- 88 or above in the Internet option, 230 or above in the computer-based option or 570 or above in the paper-based option, of the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) test.
- Grade 4 (or C) or above in English (Language or Literature) at A/S Level.
- HKDSE (Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education) Grade 3, or HKALE (Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination – Advanced Level & Advanced Supplementary Level) Grade E, or HKCEE (Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination) Grade 3-5 or Grade A-D (Syllabus B only).

Applicants with a bachelor's degree that has been taught and examined in the English medium can be considered for entry in the absence of the qualifications detailed above if applying for a non-apprenticeship programme.

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## Apprenticeship programme

Applicants to the apprenticeship programme must also:

- Have the right to work in England, meet Department for Education (DfE) residency status requirements, spend at least 50% of their working hours in England and be directly employed in a job role that will enable the requirements of the apprenticeship to be achieved.
- Have GCSE Grade 4 (or C) or above in Mathematics, or an equivalent qualification. For further information on equivalent qualifications please contact [admissions@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@ucem.ac.uk).

Applicants for the apprenticeship programme that are 19+ years old are not required to have [accepted equivalent Level 2 maths and English qualifications \(opens new window\)](#). However, the DfE will fund functional skills qualifications if deemed necessary by the Employer and apprentice. The employer and apprentice will be informed of their options at point of admission, and they will be required to confirm that they opt in or out of further level 2 study to proceed.

- Meet all of the funding eligibility requirements contained in the [DfE funding rules](#).

## Recognition of prior learning (RPL) or recognition of prior experiential learning (RPEL) routes into the programme

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) or recognition of prior experiential learning (RPEL) will be considered for entry to the programme as part on the application process, in accordance with [UCEM Code of Practice: Admissions and Recognition of Prior Learning \(opens new window\)](#).

Note: As this is a new programme, recognition of prior learning for the award of credit and credit transfer will not be available initially.

## Programme Progression

For details of progression arrangements, please view the [Academic and Programme Regulations \(opens new window\)](#).

## Award Regulations

For details of award arrangements, please view the [Academic and Programme Regulations \(opens new window\)](#).

## Career Prospects

The programme is designed for those leading, with aspirations to lead, and those with the agency to bring about change regarding sustainability in the built environment.

That might entail a change in a project, change in processes and practice, change in a department team, change at company strategy level, and change regarding stakeholder engagement. Such leaders would need to understand how to structure a problem and how to model and encourage innovation and uptake. The programme will help students access a range of roles associated with sustainability, which include:

- Director/lead/manager of Sustainability;
- Director/lead/manager of Technical Sustainability;
- Director/lead/manager of Sustainability Quality Systems;
- Director/lead/manager of Sustainable Development;
- Director/lead/manager of Sustainability Strategy;

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- Director/lead/manager of Operational Sustainability;
- Director/lead/manager of Project Sustainability.

## Programme Aims

### Programme aims

The MSc Innovation in Sustainable Built Environments is designed to ignite critical thinking and to initiate change within stakeholder organisations within the built environment and is directed to those seeking to make a positive impact around sustainability. Thinking innovatively and understanding how to challenge and change to improve sustainability is central to the programme. The programme will provide students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to lead change within their own organisation and more widely within the industry.

The programme also prepares students with a foundation for further professional development and extension of their knowledge.

### Market and internationalisation

This programme is aimed at a UK and broad international audience. However, the programme has as its basis UK law and regulatory controls.

Where possible, the programme aims to utilise international case studies and draw upon global challenges, along with international codes and conventions.

## Programme Structure

### Module List

Code	Module	Level	Credits	Core/ Elective
SUS7PAR	Paradigms of Sustainability	7	20	Core
SUS7REA	Realities of Sustainability	7	20	Core
SUS7MPT	Sustainable Materials, Processes and Technologies	7	20	Core
SUS7RSC*	Research Skills and Current Affairs	7	10	Core
SUS7INF	Sustainable Infrastructure	7	20	Core
SUS7OPS	Operationalising Sustainability	7	20	Elective for non-apprentices; Core for apprentices
SUS7INQ	Institutional Quality for Sustainability	7	20	Elective for non-apprentices; Core for apprentices
SUS7SBC	Sustainable Buildings and Cities	7	20	Elective for non-apprentices
SUS7PRP*	Final Project Proposal	7	10	Core
PRJ7RED/P RJ7WBP	Project (Research Dissertation <u>or</u> Work-based Project)	7	40	Core for non-apprentices

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SUS7EPA**	Sustainability Business Specialist End-Point Assessment**	7	40	Core for apprentices
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### Notes

Credits are part of the Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (CATS). Two UK credits are equivalent to one European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credit.

[Research Skills and Current Affairs (SUS7RSC) is a pre-requisite for the Final Project Proposal (SUS7PRP) and must be studied before starting Year 2. The Final Project Proposal (SUS7PRP) is a pre-requisite for the Final Project (either Research Dissertation (PRJ7RED), Work-based Project (PRJ7WBP)]

\*In the event that you are required to resubmit your assignment, a viva voce examination may be offered on eligible modules.

\*\*This module may only be taken when the full gateway conditions, as specified in [the Assessment Plan for the Sustainability Business Specialist Apprenticeship Standard \(opens new window\)](#), have been met, which includes successful completion of all other modules (i.e. 140 credits achieved).

## Learning Outcomes

Having successfully completed the programme, the student will have met the following learning outcomes.

### Level 7

#### A – Knowledge and understanding

Learning Outcomes	Relevant modules
A7.1 Develop a critical awareness of the key theoretical and conceptual approaches to the study of sustainability in the built environment as informed by research and practice.	Paradigms of Sustainability (SUS7PAR)  Research Skills and Current Affairs (SUS7RSC)
A7.2 Demonstrate an advanced understanding of the relationship between infrastructure and sustainability in the built environment, including the processes, materials and technologies which will play a role in delivering a more sustainable built environment.	Sustainable Infrastructure (SUS7INF)  Sustainable Materials, Processes and Technologies (SUS7MPT)
A7.3 Understand the principles of methodology and research design to create, interpret and disseminate knowledge in the area of sustainable development.	Research Skills and Current Affairs (SUS7RSC)  Final Project Proposal (SUS7FPP)
A7.4 Critically analyse the changes, opportunities, and challenges internationally, nationally, and locally and within government	Operationalising Sustainability (SUS7OPS)

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and business sectors which influence sustainability in the built environment.	Realities of Sustainability (SUS7REA)
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### B – Intellectual skills

Learning Outcomes	Relevant modules
B7.1 Synthesise a range of information and solve complex problems involving the creative application of knowledge to develop new approaches and practical solutions.	Research Dissertation (PRJ7RED) Work-based Project (PRJ7WBP) Sustainability Business Specialist EPA (SUS7EPA)
B7.2 Evaluate the rigour and validity of published research and its relevance to sustainability issues.	Research Skills and Current Affairs (SUS7RSC) Final Project Proposal (SUS7FPP) Research Dissertation (PRJ7RED)
B7.3 Analyse real-world scenarios and challenges and develop and communicate alternative ways of dealing with these, including the critical evaluation of these alternatives.	Realities of Sustainability (SUS7REA)
B7.4 Identify, design, and undertake substantial investigation to address and solve problems within the field of sustainability.	Research Dissertation (PRJ7RED) Work-based Project (PRJ7WBP) Sustainability Business Specialist EPA (SUS7EPA)

### C – Subject practical skills

Learning Outcomes	Relevant modules
C7.1 Critically understand how to embed sustainability practices within a range of organisational contexts through leadership and management to achieve meaningful change.	Realities of Sustainability (SUS7REA) Operationalising Sustainability (SUS7OPS)
C7.2 Consistently apply subject-specific knowledge and integrate theory and practice, making informed decisions to deal with complex situations of sustainability in the built environment.	Sustainable Infrastructure (SUS7INF)

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	Operationalising Sustainability (SUS7OPS)
C7.3 Demonstrate an international perspective regarding the impact and responsibility of built environment professionals on business, societies, and the environment.	Realities of Sustainability (SUS7REA)  Institutional Quality for Sustainability (SUS7INQ)  Sustainable Buildings and Cities (SUS7SBC)

### D - Key / Transferable skills

Learning Outcomes	Relevant modules
D7.1 Communicate ideas, arguments, and information in clear, effective, and reasoned ways (using technically proficient English), in written and spoken formats.	All modules
D7.2 Demonstrate proactivity and originality in problem structuring and problem-solving, and the ability to act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional level.	All module assessments  Final Project Proposal (SUS7FPP)  Work-based Project (PRJ7WBP)  Research Dissertation (PRJ7RED)  Sustainability Business Specialist EPA (SUS7EPA)
D7.3 Demonstrate independent, self-directed learning, alongside self-appraisal and reflection as required for continuing professional development.	Majority of modules.
D7.4 Contribute confidently and appropriately to group discussions / online discussion boards / other discussion forums to develop and demonstrate collaboration and team working skills.	Final Project Proposal (SUS7FPP)  Majority of modules.

## Delivery Structure

### Autumn (UK) Entry

Level	Year 1 Semester 1: Changing Your Mindset	
7	SUS7PAR	Paradigms of Sustainability

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7	SUS7REA	Realities of Sustainability
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**Year 1 Semester 2: Foundations of Sustainability**

7	SUS7MPT	Sustainable Materials, Processes and Technologies
7	SUS7RSC	Research Skills and Current Affairs
7	SUS7INF	Sustainable Infrastructure

**Year 2 onwards for non-apprenticeship students**

**Year 2 Semester 1: Pathways and options**

Choose one pathway

**Pathway A: Leadership and Management**

7	SUS7OPS	Operationalising Sustainability
7	SUS7INQ	Institutional Quality for Sustainability
7	SUS7PRP	Final Project Proposal

**Pathway B: Technical**

7	SUS7SBC	Sustainable Buildings and Cities
7	SUS7OPS	Operationalising Sustainability
7	SUS7PRP	Final Project Proposal

**Pathway C: Quality**

7	SUS7INQ	Institutional Quality for Sustainability
7	SUS7SBC	Sustainable Buildings and Cities
7	SUS7PRP	Final Project Proposal

**Year 2 Semester 2: Critical thinking and independent research**

7	PRJ7RED/PRJ7WBP	Project (Research Dissertation or Work-based Project)
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**Year 2 onwards for apprenticeship students**

**Level Year 2 Semester 1**

7	SUS7OPS	Operationalising Sustainability
7	SUS7INQ	Institutional Quality for Sustainability
7	SUS7PRP	Final Project Proposal

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## Year 2 Semester 2

7	SUS7EPA	Sustainability Assessment	Business	Specialist	End-Point
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## Module Summaries

### Core Modules

#### **(SUS7PAR) Paradigms of Sustainability**

This module introduces the topic of sustainability in the context of the built environment and how it might be conceptualized theoretically (thus complementing the Realities of Sustainability module). It will be essential to understand the ontological and epistemological assumptions being made around sustainability themes, together with what is being privileged, and the level of understanding sought. Candidates will be introduced to a range of different approaches for understanding sustainable innovation, change and their role. The module will challenge the assumptions and themes, often privileged, regarding built environment sustainability e.g., triple bottom line. The drivers of sustainability such as the United Nations sustainable development goals associated with the built environment, will be used as key touch points. The module will go into further depth in areas such as cultural and social sustainability, economic and financial sustainability and environmental sustainability, biodiversity, and climate change.

By the end of the module the candidates will have a critical understanding of the triple bottom line of sustainability within the built environment and how it impacts the wider world.

#### **(SUS7REA) Realities of Sustainability**

This module develops a student's skill in identifying the difference between fact and fiction while dealing with sustainability. This module is based on two critical aspects of master's level education. The first is the ability to synthesise, analyse and critically review data and sources of information used in practice. The second major component of this module is communicating and conveying information at master's level, involving academic writing, editing and synthesis of data and information, and being able to record findings distinctly and accurately for dissemination. Live case studies will be used to understand the realities of sustainability in practice.

#### **(SUS7MPT) Sustainable Materials, Processes and Technologies**

This module will introduce the current diverse discourse around materials, processes, and technologies (MPT) which may play a role in delivering a more sustainable built environment. The module will draw upon a socio-technical perspective recognising the range of stakeholders and agendas in achieving the uptake of such sustainable MPTs. Central to the module will be how to conceptualise MPT, such as from the management fashions school and that the sector both shapes MPT and yet is also shaped by MPT. Relevant MPT may include natural/carbon zero materials (including debates around embodied carbon), management or production processes to improve sustainability and also the range of emerging technologies and the role they might play and how stakeholders and sector can be prepared. The digital agenda (industry 4.0) and its' connection with the current discourse around what are described as modern methods, off site, robotics, light weight, and natural structures will play a central role. Emerging concepts yet established, and in their infancy, will be introduced.

#### **(SUS7RSC) Research Skills and Current Affairs**

This module will enable students to develop the research skills required to navigate the evolving sustainability discourses from academia and practice, whilst informing their own Final Project (students will be made aware of the options available to them for semester 4 and the Final Project). Essential to the module will be understanding how to recognise assumptions,

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theoretical underpinnings, bias and what is and is not being privileged in various publication types. The fundamental assumptions upon which social science is founded will be outlined and debated. An understanding of level of analysis, micro, meso and macro will be explained.

This will help students develop their critical thinking along with understanding the perspectives that make most sense to them. Operational practices around how to undertake research; forming a robust question, alternative approaches, along with data types and methods of data collection and analysis, will be discussed.

### **(SUS7INF) Sustainable Infrastructure**

This module will introduce the infrastructure society uses and needs in the context of the built environment. It will cover the major constituents which make our towns and cities function and their relationship and role in the sustainability agenda. Key areas covered include energy, transport, water, waste, digital infrastructure, and the natural environment. Attention is also given to the relationship the built environment has with power sources such as gas, nuclear, solar and wind, feeding through energy vectors such as electricity, hot water, and hydrogen, in terms of sustainability challenges. The module will seek to present a holistic and open system view of infrastructure, drawing upon the concept of towns and cities acting with a metabolism.

### **(SUS7PRP) Final Project Proposal**

Students will draw upon what they have learnt in the subject modules thus far, in particular the Research Skills and Current Affairs module, to develop a short final project proposal.

This will include developing a clear research question supported by a logical rationale, informed in part by a relevant body of knowledge. As appropriate, students will develop an aim and objectives, a hypothesis or proposition, together with an understanding of methodological choices, around a subject area associated with a sustainable built environment. In doing so, students will indicate their preferred choice for the final project module to be undertaken in semester 4. The proposal will outline key activities/milestones and expected outputs/measures of success

Ethical research considerations will be an integral part of this module.

### **(PRJ7RED) Research Dissertation (non-apprentices only)**

This module focusses upon students developing an academically robust dissertation. It will draw upon the academic body of knowledge, theories, frameworks and include academic research publications around a specific topic. Building upon the Final Project Proposal module, relevant literature will be critiqued to develop a research question, with an aim, hypothesis, proposition, and objectives as appropriate. A theoretical position and methodological choices will be discussed, and a research design developed, thus ensuring rigour at the highest level possible for an MSc. The dissertation might include primary or secondary data and analysis.

For the best dissertations, discussions will be considered for further development to become publications at external conferences such as ARCOM.

### **(PRJ7WBP) Work-based Project (non-apprentices only)**

This is a work-based research project module. It recognises that sustainability is evolving and keeping up with current affairs and competing agendas is challenging for practitioners and stakeholder organisations in the sector. Students will rehearse how to navigate the evolving discourse that is sustainability, how to understand and then critically appraise it for quality. Attention will be given to grey literature, UNSDG publications, pressure groups (accepting and denying sustainability), sustainable heritage publications and so on. The work-based project will typically either identify challenges or develop potential solutions or frameworks to challenges. As such, the project may draw heavily upon specific issues a student might be dealing with in the workplace. The work-based project may be more prescriptive, relying more

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upon professional practice and therefore have the potential of having immediate uptake and impact by a stakeholder audience (e.g., project, department, firm or organisation or broader stakeholder).

### **(SUS7EPA) Sustainability Business Specialist End-point Assessment (apprentices only)**

This module is the final element of the student's apprenticeship journey. Having successfully achieved all mandatory elements of the apprenticeship programme to date, as signed off by the employer and UCEM, students will be enrolled on this unit in order to prepare for, and undertake, the government-approved End-Point Assessment (EPA). Students will collate and present evidence in a variety of ways to demonstrate their achievement of the Standard's Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours (KSBs) competencies and how these have been developed and applied throughout the programme. The EPA consists of two discrete assessment methods: a work-based project, consisting of a report, presentation and questioning and a technical interview, underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.

### **Core/Elective Modules**

#### **(SUS7OPS) Operationalising Sustainability**

This module will introduce the practices and logics relevant to organisations operating in the built environment sector associated with becoming sustainable. The module will critique a contextual approach to the uptake of sustainable practices for organisations and the leadership and management skills needed. Key areas covered will include future studies and trends around sustainability, visions toward 2050, sustaining a firm's competitiveness over time, HRM practices to sustain a workforce including issues around diversity, inclusion, race, bullying, and sexism. Central to the module will be the theme of change, innovation, and adaptation to sustain a stakeholder organisation. Attention will also be given to understanding the economic and finance models of today and future alternatives that may impact sustainability on the international stage.

#### **(SUS7INQ) Institutional Quality for Sustainability**

This module will address the issues of standards for sustainability including BREEAM and LEED. It will cover the major regulations, UNSDG, ESD guidance, ISO14001, ethics and how these might be put into practice. Further, the module will at times take a critical view, what should be measured, how and by whom. Challenges around how we might better address issues of quality in the short and long terms around sustainability will be debated. Students will master the key institutional logics around quality which impact sustainability. By the end of the module the students will have a critical understanding of the institutional quality agenda around sustainability.

#### **(SUS7SBC) Sustainable Buildings and Cities**

This module will introduce technical sustainability in terms of our current buildings and existing towns and cities influenced by national and global agendas. With much of the narrative around sustainability focussed upon new build, it is our existing buildings and the towns and cities they make up where many sustainability challenges reside. The module looks at a range of approaches to address such challenges such as retrofitting, analysis and adaptation modelling, building flexibility, maintenance and BMS. Attention is also given to the scale and long-term challenges this presents and how to tackle this in a staged and inclusive manner.

## Learning, Teaching and Assessment

### Learning & Teaching

#### Knowledge and understanding

The teaching, learning and assessment strategy for the programme is guided by the UCEM-wide Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy (LTAS 2020-2025). This ensures all programmes promote a logical learning journey for students. The approach adopted is a student-centred learning design that supports the educational needs of UCEM's diverse student community. Learning has been designed to support students to adopt their own learning experience to best suit their needs.

Students are taught in an online environment, with 'live' lecture delivering adaptable knowledge transfer in real time, or as a recording. These sessions are supported by learning activities, interactive digital resources and real-life scenarios that enhance the learning experience.

Module delivery incorporates a range of subject appropriate resources suitable for the online learner. This may include, but is not limited to, audio-visual presentations, interactive case studies and online journals.

Students are required to undertake their own research beyond the material provided and undertake self-directed learning throughout their programme as directed, to become independent learners. In the Research Dissertation / Work-based Project / EPA module, self-directed research and learning, problem structuring and problem solving further enhances knowledge and understanding, focusing on students' own chosen research topic.

#### Intellectual skills

Learning and teaching methods are applied to enable the development of industry practice, research skills and academic literacy. These skills are developed through synchronous and asynchronous research informed teaching, interaction with multi-media learning resources, self-directed learning and via participation in lecturer, and student-centred learning activities. Assessment is guided by UCEM academics, utilising multiple assessment types and methods, as part of formative and summative assessment, to develop students' assessment literacy.

Students are encouraged to develop and apply their knowledge and understanding through independent and collaborative learning exercises, online activities, and engagement with digital resources.

#### Subject practical skills

The programme introduces key subject themes of the theoretical assumptions and foundations surrounding sustainability. That is tensioned against the realities of trying to enact sustainability in practice, what that might mean and a range of case study projects. This will offer students the opportunity to *reset* their outlook regarding all aspects associated with sustainability. Changing one's mindset and understanding is a key practical skill for leaders seeking to change and improve around sustainability.

Following this, more tangible and objective skills are covered including sustainable materials, processes and technologies and the challenge of uptake. Additional practical skills will cover the infrastructure used by the built environment and understanding how that can be made more sustainable.

The practical skills around understanding, critiquing, and forming an opinion regarding grey literature, government publications, best practice documents and other quango publications will also be covered.

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The programme then offers three pathways, each of which focuses upon different types of professional roles within the built environment. These include; Leadership and Management, Technical, and Quality.

Finally, there is a return to a developing the skills around critical thinking and research, understanding how to develop a robust research problematic, understanding the science of methods (methodology), research design, analysis and presenting findings. These are essential practical skills for running teams or departments and managing programmes and new change initiatives.

### **Key/Transferable skills**

The BE Ready Orientation sets out the importance of transferable skills. These skills are developed through the programme, utilising study, and assessment. This can be via virtual learning environment (VLE) discussion, tuition discussion, problem-solving exercises – which are conducted individually or as part of a collegiate team, and coursework, which provides the ideal combination to internalise these aspects through different learning methods. The Study Skills area of the VLE is a further resource for support in developing these skills.

The learning activities in this programme require students to undertake research, evaluate their findings and develop solutions. The teaching of module topics requires students' engagement with a range of online activities that develop research and evaluation skills and cultivate a systematic approach to structuring problems. Engagement with the UCEM learning community develops communication and collaboration skills. Additional support for transferrable skills is delivered via the programme webinars presented to the students throughout the year. Students also have the opportunity to develop transferable skills through formative and summative opportunities within the modules.

### **Assessment**

The assessment strategy for the programme is guided by the UCEM-wide Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy (LTAS 2020-2025). The aim of UCEM's assessments is to allow students an opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned using a range of formats. These different formats encourage critical self-reflection linked to personal development. To support this, assessments are clearly related to module learning outcomes.

UCEM's practice is to require assessments to be academically, vocationally, and professionally relevant. Assessments balance rigour and relevance. Some assessments are built that have direct application to industry standards, and that enable students to learn through real world scenarios and working practice. This involves the generation of tasks based on problems, scenarios or case studies from recent real-world situations that reflect and/or replicate the vocational requirements of the industry and the international nature of the subject matter. Those assessments are complimented by assessments that draw more heavily upon research, upon challenging the rhetoric and upon a wealth of rich theoretical perspectives.

All elements of assessments are discipline-specific for each programme as well as supporting the acquisition and promotion of transferable skills, including research skills development.

Formative assessment and feedback opportunities are provided throughout the programme in a variety of formats to motivate, guide and develop students through their learning. Students are required to complete various pieces of coursework in the modules which are assessed.

All assessments contributing to an award are subject to moderation policies. Moderation at UCEM is designed to reflect the quality of the student submission and the benchmark standards for the various levels of undergraduate study. Moderation of marking accords with QAA recommended best practice to ensure that marking criteria have been fairly, accurately, and consistently applied during first marking.

# MSc Innovation in Sustainable Built Environments Programme Specification

## Assessment Diet

The types of assessments used on this programme will include coursework (such as essays, case studies, reports, e-portfolios, reflections, problem or short questions or video presentations), computer-based assessments (CBA), and computer marked assessments (CMAs). The exact combinations of assessment will vary from module to module.

For apprentices, the End Point Assessment methods are a work-based project, consisting of a report, presentation and questioning and a technical interview, underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.

## End Point Assessment (apprenticeship route only)

The end-point assessment (EPA) assesses whether the apprenticeship has been passed and is based on the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the [Sustainability Business Specialist \(integrated degree\)](#) apprenticeship occupational standard. This apprenticeship has a fully integrated EPA.

The EPA period will only start once all of the pre-requisite gateway requirements for the EPA have been met. The gateway requirements include that both UCEM and the employer are satisfied that the apprentice has: consistently met the knowledge, skills, and behaviours of the Occupational Standard, successfully completed all the required modules on the programme equating to 140 on-programme credits, achieved level 2 English and maths and hold a portfolio of evidence that will be used to underpin the technical interview.

The EPA will typically be taken in the last six months of the programme. Performance in the EPA will provide the final 40 credits to the overall degree. Performance in the EPA will determine the apprenticeship grade of distinction, merit, pass or fail.

The EPA consists of a work-based Project consisting of a report, presentation and questioning and a technical interview, underpinned by a portfolio of evidence. Further details of which can be found in the End-Point Assessment Module Descriptor.

## Study Support

### BE Ready Orientation

The purpose of BE Ready is to prepare students for online learning with UCEM but also to support students throughout their learning journey. Students are expected to visit BE Ready every semester for updates, welcome back week activities as well as advice specific to their level of study.

There are a variety of resources which will help students to get started. These include how to use the VLE, how to navigate a module, the UCEM e-library and how to join a webinar. BE Ready also provides practical advice such as how to manage independent study, where to find our Study Skills resources and how to access academic or pastoral support. All this information is key to having a successful start to supported online learning with UCEM.

Resources are available to support students with referencing and how to develop good academic practice to avoid academic misconduct. A range of study skills support materials are available to apprentices.

### Student learning support

The programme is taught via UCEM's VLE and academic facilitation and support is provided online, giving student's access to UCEM Academics and Lecturers and other students worldwide.

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The Education team will guide and support students' learning. Other UCEM administrative teams provide support for assessments and technical issues including ICT. UCEM's 'Student Central' portal provides the main point of contact for students for these teams throughout the duration of their programme.

Each student, wherever their location, will have access to a wealth of library and digital resources to support their studies. Where appropriate, students will be encouraged to draw upon their local context when writing their assessments.

The Academic Support and Enhancement Teaching (ASET) Team works with departments and students to promote student retention, achievement, and success. This work is achieved through a multi-faceted approach, which consists of:

- delivering support tutorials to students identified as academically at risk to develop the academic skills needed for success;
- developing 'self-serve' support resources to enable students to develop their academic skills;
- delivering teaching webinars and drop-in sessions on academic skills;
- working with students with additional learning needs so that they can reach their potential;
- working with the Education team and other support teams to identify ways in which student success can be further facilitated.

Relevant research is also carried out to inform proactive interventions, and to develop policy and practice.

Disability, neurodiversity, and wellbeing related support is provided via a dedicated Disability and Welfare team at UCEM.

## **Apprenticeship support in your workplace and apprenticeship support from UCEM**

Students that are studying the programme as part of an apprenticeship programme will be assigned an Apprenticeship Outcomes Officer who is the primary point of contact for the apprentice and their employer during the apprenticeship. Apprentices and their employers will attend progress reviews scheduled at 12-week intervals which will review the apprentices progress, set targets, and will check the completion of the off the job diaries and that the apprentice is making demonstrable progress on their apprenticeship.

Apprentice employers should work collaboratively with the apprentice and UCEM, including active participation at 12-week progress reviews, co-ordinating off the job training time and providing the apprentice with the opportunity to practice and embed new skills in the work environment.

## **English language support**

For those students whose first language is not English, or those students who wish to develop their English language skills, additional support is provided through online resources on the VLE in the resource 'Developing Academic Writing', and / or via the ASET Team. The VLE resource includes topics such as sentence structure, writing essays and guidance for writing at Master's level aimed at developing students study skills, whilst the ASET Team offer more personalised one-to-one or group support.

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## **Personal and professional development**

It is envisaged the majority of cognate students will already have Chartered status associated with their relevant professional body. Those perhaps non-cognate, un-Chartered and transitioning to a career in the built environment career will be guided on the relevance of professional membership, specific requirements and what might best suit their needs and aspirations.

Students are encouraged and supported to understand the opportunities this MSc programme can offer, from practice, consultancy or further study including research.

More generally, UCEM has a dedicated careers advisor to ensure students have appropriate access to careers education, information, advice, and guidance at all levels.

## **Programme specific support**

This programme has a Programme Leader, as well as Module Leaders, other academics, and Academic Support Tutors to support the students throughout their time with the programme.

UCEM staff are accessible during normal UK working hours, during which they also monitor forums asynchronously and provide encouragement, assistance, and necessary academic and student feedback services.

Access to the UCEM e-Library is on a 24/7 basis and UCEM has a full-time e-Librarian during normal UK working hours.