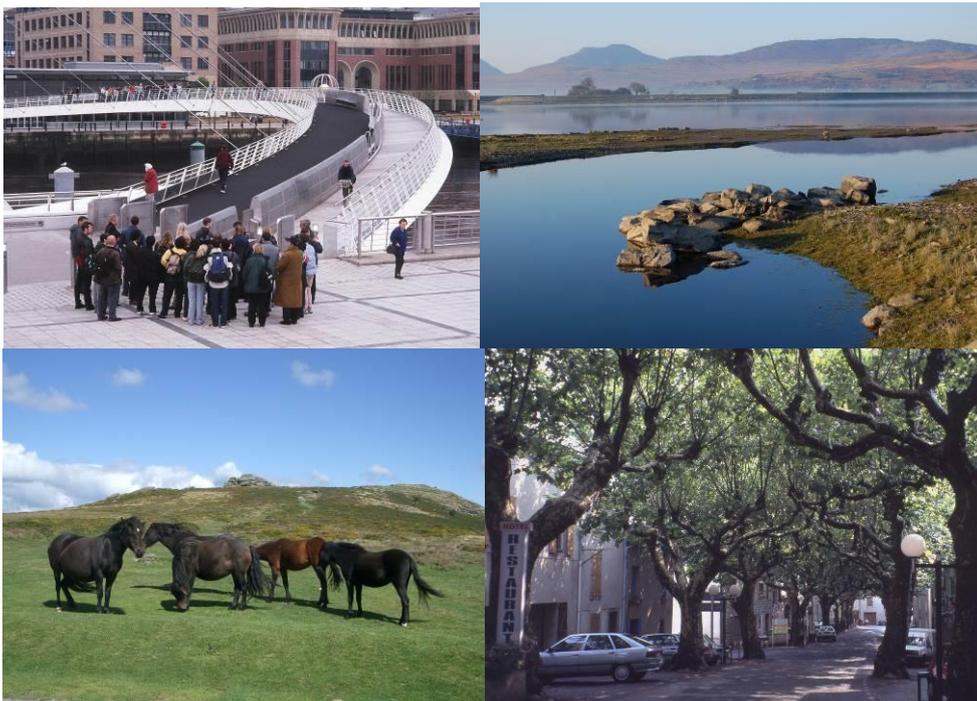# Newcastle University

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING AND LANDSCAPE

MASTER OF ARTS IN PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH (MAPER)

DEGREE PROGRAMME HANDBOOK

2020/2021

Semester Dates

Induction Weeks: Monday 28th September 2020 – Friday 16th October 2020

Semester 1: Monday 28 September 2020 – Friday 29 January 2021

Semester 2: Monday 1st February 2021– Friday 18 June 2021

Michaelmas: Monday 23 September 2019 – Friday 18 December 2020

Epiphany: Monday 11 January 2021 – Friday 26 March 2021

Easter: Monday 26 April 2021 – Friday 18 June 2021

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Full details of all School staff are available on the APL website at:
http://www.ncl.ac.uk/apl/

Communications with students either individually or by group will usually be by email. All students should therefore check their email on a regular basis which can be accessed remotely.

Degree programme regulations can be found at
https://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/programme/2020-2021/sapl.php

NOTE: A useful resource for this programme can be found at the Sustainability Resource Guide on the Robinson Library website:
http://libguides.ncl.ac.uk/sustainability

MAPER (MA in Planning and Environmental Research)

Summary of programme commitments

The University's Student Charter is available on the internet at http://www.ncl.ac.uk/pre-arrival/regulations/#termsandconditions. It is also provided to all students as part of the Student Guide. In the Student Charter, the University undertakes to provide you with access to 'high standards of teaching, support, advice and guidance'.

The Student Charter requires that students are provided with a 'programme handbook which details any professional requirements, contact hours, mode of programme delivery, assessment criteria, examination arrangements and regulations, academic guidance and support, and appeals and complaints procedures'. The purpose of this summary is to help you locate further details about this key information in your handbooks (please note that information will be found within this handbook and the Postgraduate Common Handbook).

Your handbook also contains a range of other valuable information, so you should read it thoroughly and retain a copy for future reference.

Your attention is also drawn to the Student Charter Supplementary Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Further information on this can be found at http://www.ncl.ac.uk/pre-arrival/regulations/

Average number of contact hours for this programme:	Approx.12 hours per week during semester depending on optional module selection (full-time). (note: students should check individual module information on Canvas for the exact contact session length for each week).
Mode of delivery:	Lectures, seminars, workshops, field visits, and other activities (students should check individual module information on Canvas for the exact contact session format for each week - see https://my.ncl.ac.uk/students/ Information concerning Faculty training modules for this programme can be found on:
Normal notice period for changes to the timetable, including rescheduled classes:	See SAPL PG Common Handbook and Faculty Training Handbook (as above)
Normal notice period for changes to the curriculum or assessment:	See SAPL PG Common Handbook and Faculty Training Handbook (as above)
Normal deadline for feedback on submitted work (coursework):	20 working days of the submission date, including non-term/semester periods but excluding closure periods and Bank Holidays. Students should check specific information provided for modules taken in other schools) and Faculty Training Handbook (as above) for compulsory training modules.

Normal deadline for feedback on examinations:	Whole class feedback will usually be provided within 20 days from the end of the exam period. When this date falls within the summer holiday, then exam feedback will be provided by the start of the next semester/term. Students should check specific information provided for modules taken in other schools and Faculty Training Handbook (as above) for compulsory training modules.
Assessment methods and criteria:	Essay, coursework, seminar, poster presentation, report, dissertation, exams. These vary by module. Students should check module information provided on Canvas for individual modules and Faculty Training Handbook (as above) for compulsory training modules.
Academic guidance and support:	Raymond Abdulai as Degree Programme Director, Caroline McLean, Graduate School Administrator Student & Academic Services caroline.mclean@ncl.ac.uk

1. INTRODUCTION

I would like to extend a warm welcome to all who are joining the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape to study on the MA Planning and Environment Research programme. The Degree Programme Handbook outlines the general aims for the degree programme.

This MAPER Degree Programme Handbook should be read in conjunction with the following information.

- The Newcastle University <u>General Regulations.</u> These describe the University and Faculty-wide frameworks of regulations relating to issues of assessment and progress and general provisions for programmes. Please see
http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/
The specific programme regulations and specifications for the MA in Planning and Environment Research which can be found here
https://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/programme/2020-2021/sapl.php
- The Postgraduate Common Handbook for Taught Postgraduate Programmes in APL (covers general issues of student support). This can be accessed via the school website.
- The Module Guide and Module Outlines http://www.ncl.ac.uk/module-catalogue/
- The Research Training Handbook published by the Faculty (which includes full details of the social and environmental science research training elements of MAPER)
- Module Handouts, provided by the individual Module Leaders, giving further detail on the timing and nature of lectures and other learning activities, assessment questions/topics and detailed submission times/dates and reading lists. These are also available through the Canvas Teaching online site once you are registered for a module.

Please note that changes to the Programme structure and module descriptions, which can be made to improve the quality of the Programme, may take some time to be reflected in all the above documentation. If you are in doubt, please consult the module leader and/or the Programme Director for the most updated version of the documentation.

2. INTRODUCING MAPER

The Master of Planning and Environment Research (MAPER) is a specialised research training course that is recognised by the ESRC. It is a one-year full time or two-year part-time programme. The course:

- Provides state-of-the-art training to develop students' skills and expertise in all aspects of contemporary planning, housing, design, and environmental research.
- Combines specialised training in planning, landscape and environmental research methods with an in-depth coverage of the methodological, philosophical and ethical dimensions of broader social science research.
- Draws primarily on the very wide range of specialised postgraduate optional modules available in SAPL with possibilities to take modules from other disciplines and Schools throughout the University. This allows students to customise their choices to fit their specialised interests and PhD aspirations. Thus, MAPER students, in partnership with Dissertation and potential PhD supervisor(s), will be able to tailor their portfolio of taught modules to their desired specialist study area.
- Integrates students into a cutting-edge research culture. Postgraduate research students at APL are part of a dynamic Faculty Graduate School which provides students

with excellent opportunities for learning and interactions beyond their initial areas of research and expertise.

The MAPER Programme builds on the School's long tradition of academic and vocational training in planning, landscape and related disciplines. It draws upon elements of a range of well-established and highly successful programmes in planning, landscape and urban design. Students from these courses have developed careers in professional practice in the public sector (around 55%), in private sector consultancy (around 40%) and in research (around 5%). In the case of MAPER, however, we are attracting students who wish to go on to undertake doctoral studies and research careers in academia or public policy.

3.   AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF MAPER

These are:
- To meet the aims of the ESRC's postgraduate training guidelines by providing high quality research training at Master's level in Planning and Environment Research
- To provide learning opportunities to enable graduates to acquire the knowledge and understanding, skills and aptitudes necessary to undertake advanced research in planning in general, with the possibility to specialise in a range of issues including environment, housing, landscape, urban design, city regeneration and development.
- To contribute to the University's objectives by providing high quality research training to an increasing number of postgraduates (Institutional Plan, 6.7 (ii) and (iii)) and enhancing their key skills and employability (5.7(iv)).
- To produce graduates who can proceed to careers in research in Universities, the public sector, the private sector, or the non-profit sector.
- To provide a qualification which fully meets the learning outcomes at Level 7 in the FHEQ.
- To comply with prevailing University policies and QAA codes of practice

3.1   INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES OF MAPER
MAPER has been designed to meet the ESRC 1+3 training guidelines. These guidelines emphasize the need for students to acquire key generic and subject-specific research skills in the master's year prior to embarking on a doctoral programme. The programme also caters for non ESRC-sponsored students, who could progress on to a doctoral programme or pursue a career in academic or non-academic research.

The programme provides training in research methods and general research skills. The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas.

3.1.1   Knowledge and Understanding:
On completing the programme students should have:

Ethical Issues
- A1   A knowledge and understanding of matters relating to privacy and confidentiality in research
- A2   An awareness of the political context of research
- A3   An awareness of professional codes of practice
- A4   A knowledge and understanding of the power relations inherent in research field work

A5   An awareness of the ethical responsibilities that a researcher has towards the researched

Data collection and analysis

A6   A knowledge and understanding of the application of selected methods of data collection

A7   An understanding of strengths and weaknesses of different types of data and the development of a critical use of sources

A8   An understanding of the use of methods and tools to analyse data

A9   A good understanding in both qualitative and quantitative data analysis

3.1.2   Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

Principles of Research

B1   Define and formulate research problems and questions and hypotheses

B2   Evaluate and select appropriate research methods

B3   Understand sampling, sampling error, and biases in results

B4   Apply concepts of generalisability, validity, reliability, and replicability.

Subject-related outcomes

B5   Demonstrate an understanding of the various traditions in social science research and their applicability to planning, environment, and housing research

B6   Demonstrate an understanding of current theoretical perspectives to planning, housing, and environment research and their relationships to research and policy analysis

B7   Demonstrate an understanding of the ethical issues surrounding planning, housing, and environment research and policy making

B8   Demonstrate an ability to develop research strategies to address policy and research issues in both core and specialised areas of planning, environment, and housing research.

3.1.3   Practical Skills:

On completing the programme students should be able to:

Bibliographic and Computing Skills

C1   Demonstrate the skills to identify and retrieve relevant materials relating to research, including annals, books, journals, theses, conference proceedings and resources available electronically and on the internet.

C2   Demonstrate the skills to maintain a personal research bibliography and use EndNote

C3   Demonstrate IT skills, which may include word processing and other basic computing skills, including spreadsheets and database management and SPSS.

3.1.4   Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to develop and demonstrate:

D1   The skills to communicate and present research findings effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences

D2   The skills of effective written communication and presentation

D3   The skills to manage research, including writing proposals, planning the research project, and implementation on time

D4   The skills to work effectively as a member of teams both subject specific and multi-disciplinary.

4. THE STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF MAPER

The MAPER course, which consists of 180 credits (60 in each of the three Semesters), is structured as follows:

mester 1	mester 2	mester 3 (Summer)
HSS8001 Thinking About Research (10)	HSS8004 Qualitative Methodology in the Arts, Humanities and Social Science (20)	TCP8099 Dissertation (60)
HSS8002 Information Skills (Social Sciences) (10)		
HSS8003 Dissertation Preparation (10)	HSS8005 Introduction to Quantitative Methods (20)	
Options (30)		
	Options (20)	

MAPER is made up of **three** elements:

(1) A compulsory programme of in-depth research training (70 credits). These modules (shown with HSS prefixes above) develop key planning and environment research skills within a comprehensive grounding of social science research methods training. The 70 credits taught at Faculty level focus on generic research skills and competencies across the social sciences. The details of these modules are as follows:

Code	Descriptive title	Credits Sem 1	Credits Sem 2	Credits Sem 3	Total Credits	Type
HSS8001	Thinking about Research	10			10	Core
HSS8002	Information Skills	10			10	Core
HSS8003	Dissertation Preparation	10			10	Core
HSS8004	Qualitative Methodology in the Arts, Humanities and Social Science		20		20	Core
HSS8005	Introduction to Quantitative Methods		20		20	Core

A core module is one which must be passed in order for the University to award the MA in Planning and Environment Research

(2) A customised programme of subject-specific postgraduate modules selected from the full range available in the School (50 credits: 30 in Semester 1 and 20 in Semester 2).

Modules in the School aim to engage with a full spectrum of state-of-the-art planning, environment, housing, and design research issues. To reflect the wide variety of disciplinary and research interests amongst MAPER students, all modules selected here are options. Students are able to customise their portfolio of courses to fit with the particular orientation of their own research interests. Such choices will be made under the individual guidance of the Degree Programme Director to agree a balanced programme of study that will achieve the individual student's study requirements and to complement the research training modules. This approach is designed to maximise the degree to which the customised MAPER options programme provides a foundation for

later PhD study (especially through application to ESRC; note that this programme is recognised on the 1+3 route Masters+PhD study for ESRC funding purposes).

Students may take any module outside the School appropriate to their study focus, subject to timetabling constraints. Students need to investigate potential modules and discuss and agree registration on such modules with the relevant module leader and the MAPER Degree Programme Director

Examples of such modules from other schools include:

ACE2003 Landscape, Culture and Heritage
LAW8147 Introduction to Planning Law

There are a wide variety of modules students might select. Some modules within the School that may be available include:

Code	Descriptive Title	Credits Sem 1	Credits Sem 2	Credits Sem 3	Total Credits
TCP7021	Project 1: Spatial Strategies		20		20
TCP7023	Economics of Development	10			10
TCP8001	Planning Frameworks	10			10
TCP8025	Linked Research Project	10	20		30
TCP8902	The Reflexive Practitioner	10			10
TCP8034	Planning and Sustainability	10			10
TCP8921	Globalisation and Social Justice	10			10
TCP8920	Globalisation and Social Justice: Project*		10		10
APL8000	Conceptualising Landscape		20		20
APL8004	Conceptualising Landscape		10		10

* There is a pre-requisite Semester 1 module with each of these

For more module options and full module outline forms please visit the following website: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/module-catalogue/modules.php

Study Themes:
In order to help select appropriate modules, it is recommended that you think about your study in terms of general patterns or 'themes' that link to your overall interests and your dissertation topic area. For example, the following can be used as guidelines for further discussion with the MAPER Programme Director

- Landscape Planning & Environmental Assessment
- Planning & Climate Change
- Urban Design, Regeneration & Development
- Housing, Environment & Planning
- Overseas Development & Environmental Planning
- Environmental Conservation & Management

(3) A Dissertation, supervised by a member of staff, completed in the Summer Term (60 credits). This will provide students with the chance to implement the proposal developed earlier. It also provides the ideal opportunity to pilot ideas and techniques with a view to broader implementation in a following ESRC-funded Ph.D. Students will complete a dissertation project (60 credits) which will enhance and demonstrate their research skills

and training in planning and environmental research. There are no formal restrictions on the type of project that can be chosen although projects are likely to employ some empirical research.

The dissertation co-ordinator (module number TCP8099) issues guidance notes and assessment specifications to all candidates registered for a master's dissertation. The initiative for choice of topic rests with the student, although seeking advice from the co-ordinator and subject staff is encouraged. All candidates are allocated a dissertation tutor who will offer advice on the proposal, methodology and data collection, but who is not expected to offer an unofficial assessment of a final draft before submission. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange appointments with the tutor and to seek tutor's advice. Candidates are normally expected to pass the taught modules before proceeding to the dissertation.

5.   MAIN ACTIVITIES OF THE PROGRAMME

Each 10-credit module represents 100 hours of total student time. This may include 20 hours of staff contact - although there is variation between modules. It will also include time for assessment, and for 'self-organised' study. Self-organised, or self-directed study can include reading, writing and note making, photography and sketching, site visits, watching and reviewing DVDs or other media, self-organised group discussions with fellow students or even simply THINKING!

5.1   LECTURES/SEMINARS/WORKSHOPS

Modules involving the teaching of knowledge, concepts and skills are normally based around lecture courses combined with a wide variety of other learning activities, such as seminar discussions and workshops (short practical exercises designed to develop a particular skill), as well as student-centred learning through library studies etc.

Some modules, or parts of modules, will be taught to large student groups, encompassing both postgraduates and undergraduates. Working with students on other programmes can often provide opportunities to gain broader perspectives on the issues to be considered.

Modules can be 'long and thin' or 'short and fat'. This means that they may run as a series of lectures etc. throughout a semester or even run over two semesters. However, modules may also be structured as an intensive session over a short period such as a week. Students should check the pattern of their modules and the dates of the sessions carefully and seek to avoid timetable clashes.

Ethical issues (A1-A5) are taught by lectures and workshops whilst teaching for A6-A9 as well as B3 and B4 is delivered through the research methods and methodology modules in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences via a combination of lectures, group discussions, workshops and data analysis practicals. B1 & B2 are delivered in the modules about research and dissertation preparation whilst B5-8 are taught in a module in research through an amalgam of lectures, group discussions, workshops and both discipline-specific and multi-disciplinary teamwork. Practical skills such as bibliographical and IT skills (C2 & C3), are taught in the information skills module via workshops and practical classes. D1, D3 and D4 are taught through teamwork and individual presentations whilst D2 is taught through a range of iterative written assessments. The dissertation project provides specific opportunities of skill development through the construction of a research plan, through synthesizing knowledge and by participating in dissertation workshops and individual meetings with supervisors.

Many modules are assessed entirely in the form of coursework. Certain modules, however, may be assessed by a combination of written examination and coursework.

5.2 PROJECT WORK

Project work may sometimes be relevant to MAPER students and helps develop relevant skills such as team building, communication and creativity. Assignments may be either individual or group projects. Where appropriate, projects will be organised in conjunction with discipline related bodies in the region. Linked Research Projects offer in-depth work as part of a specialist research team.

During assignments it is often necessary to visit sites or professional offices. These may take place without any accompanying staff, and at times to be arranged by students directly. In such cases, personal safety is the responsibility of the students concerned and students should consider risks carefully in consultation with University policy on such working.

6. ASSESSMENT

Please refer to the PG Common Handbook.

7. STUDENT COMMENTS, FEEDBACK AND GRIEVANCES

Students are encouraged to make comment about any aspect of their programme or their life in the School, or seek remedies for specific grievance, further information on this can be found in the PG Common Handbook.

8. EXTERNAL EXAMINER

For 2020-21 the examiners for Master of Arts in Planning and Environment Research are:

Academic: TBC

Planning Professional: Ms Victoria Hills, Royal Town Planning Institution (RTPI)

In order to help ensure the quality of the education it provides and the maintenance of the standards of its awards, the University places significant reliance on its external examiners by:

- Requiring them to provide independent and impartial advice, as well as informative comment on the University's standards and on student achievement in relation to those standards;
- Drawing upon their professional advice and expertise and giving full and serious consideration to their reports.

It is inappropriate for students to make direct contact with an External Examiner, in particular regarding their individual performance in assessments, and that alternative mechanisms are available such as an appeal or complaint. Please refer to the PG Common Handbook for more information.

Students can engage formally with the quality management process through which the University considers and responds to External Examiners through course representatives on Boards of Studies, Student Staff Committees, and Faculty Teaching, Learning and Student Experience Committees.

9. FURTHER KEY INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

For further key information on the following listed items please refer to the PGT Common Handbook which can be found on the school website.

- University Timetables
- Attendance
- Student Self Service Portal (S3P)

Student Support
- Personal Tutoring
- Peer Mentoring
- Other Sources of Support in Your School
- Student Services (King's Gate)
- Student Advice Centre

What to do if things go wrong
- If You Are Ill
- Personal Extenuating Circumstances
- Change of Circumstances (Transfer, Suspend Studies or Withdraw)
- Complaints and Appeals

Assessment and Feedback
- Coursework Submission
- Late Submission of Assessed Work
- Examinations
- Feedback on Assignments
- Marking Criteria
- Marking and Moderation Processes
- How Assessment Affects Your Progress
- Assessment Irregularities and Disciplinary Procedures

Student Representation and Feedback Mechanisms
- Overview
- Module Evaluations
- External Surveys
- Student Representation on Committees

Ensuring the Quality of Your Degree
- Mechanisms for Ensuring the Quality of Your Degree

Resources Tools for Study and Revision

- University Library
- Writing Development Centre
- INTO Newcastle In-Sessional English/Language Support
- Maths-Aid
- Computing Facilities
- Careers Service
- Health and Safety

Additional University Contact Information

- Additional Contact Information

APPENDIX A: DISSERTATION GUIDELINES (TCP 8099)

Initial Notes and Instructions

a.   Introduction

This note is to give you guidance on the submission requirements and assessment criteria for the dissertation required for the MA degree.

b.   Submission

The dissertation should be submitted via Canvas

c.   Subject Matter and Contents

Your study **MUST** be analytical: it **MUST** pose a **research question** which it is seeking to answer, or a **hypothesis** it is seeking to test according to explicit criteria. The dissertation is an academic piece of research evaluating an issue relevant to the discipline and should be approached as such. It is NOT a practice issue or a consultancy report.

It **MUST** contain the following elements:

a) A clear statement of aims and objectives of the research or hypothesis to be tested;
b) A critical review of available literature and sources on the theme chosen;
c) A description of the theory and methodology or framework (qualitative and/or quantitative) by which the research objectives or hypothesis will be evaluated;
d) A discussion of data sources their limitations, in relation to the methodology adopted (qualitative and/or quantitative);
e) An analysis and interpretation of data allowing the research question to be answered, plus an appraisal of any limitations of the results as a consequence of the research methods used and data collected;
f) Conclusions, an answer to the research question posed, a discussion of the significance of the findings in the overall research context, and establish any possible policy implications;
g) Full reference list and correct citations of documentary sources within the text.

(NB: the above points are used as assessment criteria)

d.   Tips

- Do not write all you know about the subject – be selective and focussed.
- Keep description to a minimum: the whole dissertation should be analytical rather than descriptive.
- Do not treat this as an account of interesting cases you have known.
- Ensure that it is about something, not everything.
- Avoid information-overload, i.e. over-attention to assembly of material rather than its constructive use in analysis.
- From the outset, try to visualise the end product and set out your draft contents page, your chapter structure and statement of objectives, so that you can always be clear about how each element or line of enquiry contributes to the whole and helps you answer your research question.
- Be systematic in assembling material and retain FULL bibliographical details from the start.
- Allow plenty of time for any correspondence, visits, interviews, etc, the importance of time management is critical to successful completion of the dissertation!

- Copies of School dissertations completed in previous years can be consulted in SAPL Resource Centre, Robinson Library, for guidance on standards & formats.
- Consider the use of illustrations, maps, diagrams, charts, graphs etc. carefully: good use of figures can enhance your study and may provide a large amount of information quickly to the reader.

e.   Reference List

ALL sources must be given, and a full bibliography included. Marks will be deducted if this is not done correctly. A recognised system of citation MUST be used. The Harvard (name, date) system is strongly recommended; with references listed alphabetically at the end of the dissertation before any appendices. For example,

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (2000). *FCDPAG5: Flood and Coastal Defence Project Appraisal Guidance: environmental appraisal*. MAFF, London.

Nelson, Arthur C. (1994). Development Impact Fees: the next generation. *The Urban Lawyer 26, 541-562.*

Powell, Jane and Amelia Craighill (1997). The UK Landfill Tax, in Timothy O'Riordan (ed.) *Ecotaxation*. Earthscan, London.

Guidance is available from the "Notes for Contributors" page of many academic journals.

f.   Length

The dissertation should be approximately 15,000 words; but this will depend heavily on typeface and style of presentation. Excessive length will be penalised by a reduction in the mark awarded. This regulation length is exclusive of bibliography, technical appendices (if any), maps, diagrams, tables and illustrations etc.

g.   Presentation

A copy to be submitted electronically via Canvas. This should be typed, 1.5 or double line-spaced, in Times-Roman or Arial font, with font size 11 pts or 12 pts.

h.   Examination

The dissertation will be assessed in August. The Examination Board meets in October/November.

APPENDIX B: SCHOOL RESEARCH

Research

The School has a dynamic and vigorous research programme and a wide range of expertise. Staff in the School have an excellent record in attracting research grants and contracts, an extensive range of local, national, and international research contacts, and a track-record of research collaboration with institutions from around the world. There are also active links with related research groups, centres and schools in the University.

The research objective of the School is to create a high-quality research environment which promotes staff development, informs the transformation of the built environment and contributes to both undergraduate and postgraduate teaching. Research, consultancy and practice are seen as providing valuable inputs into the education of architecture, town planning, and landscape students. Within this overall policy, the goals of the research in the School are to:

1. Establish self-sustaining groups in which research, postgraduate research students and taught courses are mutually supportive.
2. Augment the School's standing as a centre of excellence in architecture, town planning, and landscape architecture research.
3. Establish our principal researchers as leaders in their fields. Disseminate results of research effectively and in a manner, which reflects the quality of the School's work.
4. Promote collaboration within the School and with other Schools in the Faculty and the University, with other organisations in the field of research and with the construction industry and the policy community.

One of the specific research objectives of the School is to create a high-quality research environment which promotes postgraduate research. Consequently, the School encourages postgraduate research at both MPhil and PhD levels. The research degrees of this University are very well regarded throughout the world because of their academic quality, contemporary and local relevance and our high completion rates. The students are encouraged to produce high-quality work worthy of publication and circulation to interested persons and organisations worldwide. The staff are happy to assist those who are willing to have their work published. Methodology is given a high priority and the School is actively involved in the Research Training Programme organised at Faculty level.

Research Themes

Research is structured in the School around two research centres (see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/research/directory/centres/):

Global Urban Research Unit (GURU) led by Professor Simin Davoudi was formed through the merger of three successful urban research centres (CREUE, CUT and CARDO). It is organised around 4 themes:

- Cities, Security and Vulnerability
- Cities and International Development
- Planning and Environmental Dynamics
- Power, Place and Materiality

Architecture Research Collaborative (ARC)
The collaborative is organised to respond to and support research across a number of common themes that can change as our collective concerns shift. The themes currently running are:

- Cultures and Transition
- Futures, Values and Imaginaries
- Mediated Environments
- Research by Design
- Social Justice, Wellbeing and Renewal
- Specifications, Prescriptions and Translation

Inter-school research groups
Much of the research in the School is based on interdisciplinary working and teams have active collaborative links with researchers in other University schools, nationally, in Europe and overseas. Additional active research areas and other inter-school research groups include:

Centre for Urban and Regional Development Studies (CURDS)
http://www.ncl.ac.uk/curds/

Centre for Rural Economy (CRE)
http://www.ncl.ac.uk/cre/

The McCord Centre for Historic and Cultural Landscape
 http://www.ncl.ac.uk/mccordcentre/
Landscape demands interdisciplinary approaches, and the McCord Centre is an interdisciplinary research centre based in the School of History, Classics and Archaeology. Landscape researchers are uniquely placed to cut across traditional subjects and time periods. The McCord centre is committed to developing new interdisciplinary methods for analysing both the physical and the intangible aspects of landscape. Landscape staff from SAPL are involved in the McCord Centre.

Links with University research institutes

- Newcastle Institute for Sustainability
- Newcastle Institute for Social Renewal
- Newcastle Institute for Ageing

Staff are involved in the editing of a number of internationally renowned journals: *Landscape Research*, the *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, and the *Journal of Planning Theory*. Several academic staff are members of the editorial boards of a number of other major international journals.

Details of the research interests of individual members of staff and how to contact them may be found in the Postgraduate Common Handbook.

Visiting Researchers
In addition to those who are registered for higher degrees of this University, the School hosts from time to time those who wish to use its resources, the libraries, laboratories and other facilities of the University, for the purpose of their own research or to prepare materials for publication, as visiting members of staff, or as registered Occasional Students of the University. Some are registered for a higher degree of their own home

University; others are on sabbatical leave. All are welcome to the School and form a valued part of the academic community.

APPENDIX A

Standards Template for MA Planning and Environment Research

	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Knowledge and understanding of:	A good knowledge and understanding of town planning at an advanced level	A very good knowledge and understanding of town planning at an advanced level	An excellent knowledge and understanding of town planning at an advanced level
	A good knowledge and understanding of the concepts, methods and techniques used to advance scholarship in town planning	A very good knowledge and understanding of the concepts, methods and techniques used to advance scholarship in town planning	An excellent knowledge and understanding of the concepts, methods and techniques used to advance scholarship in town planning
	A good knowledge and understanding of how such concepts, methods and techniques are applied to create and interpret knowledge in town planning	A very good knowledge and understanding of how such concepts, methods and techniques are applied to create and interpret knowledge in town planning	An excellent knowledge and understanding of how such concepts , methods and techniques are applied to create and interpret knowledge in town planning
Skills and abilities:	A good ability to critically evaluate current research an advanced scholarship in town planning	A very good ability to critically evaluate current research an advanced scholarship in town planning	An excellent ability to critically evaluate current research an advanced scholarship in town planning
	A good ability to apply the above in original ways in their own research or advanced scholarship	A very good ability to apply the above in original ways in their own research or advanced scholarship	An excellent ability to apply the above in original ways in their own research or advanced scholarship
Key skills:	All graduates will have gained a range of key skills in terms of written communication, interpersonal communication, oral presentation, teamwork, planning and organising, problem solving, initiative, adaptability, numeracy and computer literacy. They will also have acquired the independent learning ability required for life-long learning.		

APPENDIX B

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING & LANDSCAPE
DESCRIPTION OF LEVELS OF ATTAINMENT: POSTGRADUATE & DIPLOMA PLANNING PROGRAMMES: STUDENTS 2020/21 ENTRY

CLASS OR GRADE	MARK RANGE	EXAMS	PROJECTS/ ESSAYS/ REPORTS	DISSERTATION	DESIGN PROJECT WORK
DISTINCTION	80+	Make exemplary connections between the different areas of the curriculum with originality. Synthesise, integrate and critique a wide range of evidence and information sources.	Demonstrates an exemplary understanding of the subject at a factual and conceptual level and includes original or imaginative insight and approaches.	Exemplary work. Demonstrates original or imaginative insights. Potentially publishable material.	Demonstrate originality and flair in the treatment and exposition of the subject matter. Exemplary work individually and / or in groups, demonstrating high levels of initiative and autonomy.
DISTINCTION	79 70	Excellent, perceptive understanding of the issues plus a coherent well-read and stylish treatment, displaying some originality.	Knowledge and understanding of the subject matter, coverage, internal consistency, organisation and style of presentation are excellent. Selection, interpretation, comparison, evaluation and integration of material from sources demonstrate ability to analyse critically and synthesise.	Excellent work. Identification with academic research approach. Thorough understanding of the subject and its context with evidence of critical thought and analysis.	Able to formulate innovative course of action as responses to a variety of design problems. Communicate effectively through graphic and/ or electronic means.
MERIT	69 60	Very good, perceptive understanding of the issues plus a coherent well-read and stylish treatment though with less originality than a Distinction.	Demonstrates a very good understanding of the main arguments, concepts and context. The coverage, internal structure, organisation and style are very good. Material from sources is carefully and critically selected.	Thorough, well-researched, demonstrating a very good understanding of the subject and its context. Larks the sharpness of analytical edge found with Distinction.	Good/ very good and competent throughout, occasionally transcended. Confident resolution of the problems/issues.
PASS	59 50	Good work but based on a narrower range of material when compared to a Merit. Presented in a good framework with some originality.	The main issues and concepts are understood and described. Knowledge, coverage, internal consistency, organisation and style are good.	Research basis is good but the topic has not been explored or lacks the degree of critical or original element evident in a Merit.	Generally good with adequate resolution of problems/ issues. May contain some flaws or be partly unfinished.
FAIL	49 40	Unstructured and with increasing error component. Concepts are disordered or flawed.	Insufficient evidence of understanding of main issues and concepts. Weaknesses in coverage of contents and sources, internal consistency and organisation of arguments. Use of sources inadequate.	Material insufficient to sustain dissertation. Poorly structured or organised. No consistent thread of argument or original and critical insights.	Shallow, flawed or incomplete work.
FAIL	39 0	Fundamental errors of concept and scope or poor in knowledge, structure and expression.	Very limited knowledge of the main issues and concepts. Very limited use of sources and problems of relevance. Errors of fact or interpretation.	Very limited source material, inadequate structure of argument and little demonstration of critical analysis.	Little evidence of basic competence or imagination or very incomplete. Shows little grasp of the subject.

NOTE: These descriptions are to be read in conjunction with the Module Outlines.
http://www.ncl.ac.uk/internal/module-catalogue/

The standards and levels of achievement relate to TCP modules, but modules taken outside the school may have their own standards and levels of achievement which should be referred to by the student