University of Sheffield

Programme Specification

This specification provides a summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

The content of our courses is reviewed annually to make sure it's up-to-date and relevant. Individual modules are occasionally updated or withdrawn. This is in response to discoveries through our world-leading research; funding changes; professional accreditation requirements; student or employer feedback; outcomes of reviews; and variations in staff or student numbers. In the event of any change we will inform students and take reasonable steps to minimise disruption.

Programme Details

1. Programme title	Landscape Architecture		
2. Award type	Master of Arts		
3. Programme details	**FHEQ Level:** FHEQ Level 7	**Mode of Study:** Full-time	**Duration:** 2 years
4. Faculty	Faculty of Social Sciences		
5. School	**Owning:** Architecture and Landscape		
6. Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body	Landscape Institute (LI)		
7. HECoS code *Select between one and three codes from the HECoS vocabulary.*	**Code:** 100124 **Percentage:** 100	**Code:** **Percentage:**	**Code:** **Percentage:**
Programme code(s) (internal use)	ALAT011		

9. Programme aims

The programme aims to:	
A1	Provide a route into the landscape profession for those who have a degree in another subject and who have not previously studied landscape architecture.
A2	Provide a programme which is relevant to professional practice and which meets professional accreditation requirements.
A3	Provide a curriculum that: ● Develops students' knowledge, understanding and skills in landscape design, planning and management and, in particular, emphasises holistic knowledge and solutions; creativity and imagination; the progressive development of design skills. ● Develops students' sensitivity to the needs of people and communities, and awareness of the importance of environmental sustainability. ● Enables students to develop skills and abilities in both creative thinking and visual communication and in independent research, analysis and written/verbal communication. ● Enables students to pursue specialist interests in contemporary issues related to landscape architecture through research aligned with the interests and expertise of their chosen supervisor.
A4	Encourage progressive development of the range of knowledge and skills required by a landscape architect, including through contact with practitioners on the programme, and by involvement in projects that simulate professional work.
A5	Encourage active learning through practical projects involving both independent study and the achievement of collective goals through teamwork.
A6	Incorporate a diversity of assessment methods designed to test a wide range of competencies and skills.

10. Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding (K) On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:	
K1	The principles, processes, media, and tools necessary for the practice of landscape architecture.
K2	Landscape theories and histories, including design approaches and practices, the philosophies that underpin them and their historical development and modern practice.
K3	The nature, characteristics and performance of the inorganic and organic elements and processes employed in the creation of landscapes and of their implications for future maintenance and management.
K4	The principles and practice of landscape planning, landscape ecology and ecological design and their role in landscape practice.
K5	The social aspects of design, the importance of users and techniques for involving them in design processes.

K6	The nature of professional practice in landscape design, including working in practice, landscape and environmental law and contracts and specifications.
K7	The range of research philosophies and methodologies relevant to landscape research in the contrasting areas of science, social science and humanities.
Skills and other attributes (S) *When considering the skills and attributes developed in this programme, please refer to the Sheffield Graduate attributes (SGAs). SGAs can be found here* On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:	
S1	Create design proposals for different kinds of landscapes in an innovative and integrated manner which is responsive to people, place and nature.
S2	Manipulate landscape elements through design, planning and management, including exploration and critical evaluation of alternative ideas.
S3	Contribute to strategic and policy thinking about the conservation, creation, restoration and maintenance of landscapes at various scales.
S4	Employ a range of visual, verbal and written media, including digital and non-digital communication methods, to both develop and express landscape architectural ideas.
S5	Appreciate the different qualities of landscape solutions and to both give and receive criticism on these proposals.
S6	Carry out in practice a range of relevant techniques including site survey and analysis, social surveys, preparing briefs, assessing the environmental effects of development and assessing the character of landscapes.
S7	Identify a suitable landscape topic for individual research, formulate a research proposal, develop an appropriate research strategy and implement this to complete a research dissertation.
S8	Use a range of relevant computer software, including computer aided design and image manipulation and graphic presentation packages.
S9	Communicate effectively using visual, verbal, and written skills in a variety of media and to employ these skills effectively to present, exchange and review ideas, theories, findings, conclusions and proposals.
S10	Self-manage time and tasks and personal reflection.
S11	Relate to and work with other people including group/team work.
S12	Work independently to gather and analyse information and to identify solutions to problems.

11. Learning and teaching methods *(this should include a summary of methods used throughout the programme, including any unique features and should be written with a student focus as this information will display to current students and applicants i.e. prospectus)*

This programme uses a wide range of teaching and learning methods to achieve the learning outcomes listed above.

The landscape studio is central to the programme. You will tackle design for increasingly complex sites based on real world issues, led by experienced practitioners, and leading academics. Our focus is on incrementally building your confidence, skills and knowledge in how to develop landscape design, planning and management solutions. Practical projects are designed to foster 'learning by doing' , reinforcing knowledge and understanding (K1 – K6) integrated with the development of subject specific and transferable skills (S1-S7, S8 - S12).

Support and guidance is provided through individual and small group tutorials, and collective "reviews". Reviews emulate the client and public meetings typical of professional life. You will learn how to present work visually and verbally within groups, receiving constructive feedback from tutors and also by peers, developing communication skills, as well as gaining greater insight into the possibilities of design.

The acquisition of knowledge and understanding relevant to Landscape Architecture (K1 – K6 above), is achieved by lectures and less formal presentations by the UKs largest Landscape faculty, designed to convey essential information about key principles, theory and practice. Workshops and practical sessions play an important role in introducing and developing specific skills. These are particularly important in introducing and developing skills in the use of computer aided design, digital image manipulation and graphics packages which are an essential part of modern Landscape Architecture (S8). Workshops also play an important part in teaching landscape principles and practice (S1 – S6), in exploring research philosophies, methodologies and skills (K7 and S6) and in development of other transferable skills (S7 – S12).

Team work skills (S11) for example are introduced through group work within projects.

Independent study is critical to the successful completion of the programme and contributes to all learning outcomes. It has a central role in all the practical projects, even though some modules may also have a group work component. Students work independently, with the help of studio tutorials, to integrate material from lectures and workshops, to develop their own solutions to specific problems, and to work these up into graphic presentations or reports for submission and assessment. Independent research skills are developed through research methods, work on the initial research report, carried out over the summer vacation between the two years of the programme, and through completion of the final MA dissertation. This is supported by individual tutorials with the research supervisor.

Projects usually involve site visits, in year 1 to places in and around Sheffield, then increasingly further afield to carry out surveys appropriate to the task. These visits might, for example, include an urban park or a city centre space, or an area of countryside outside the city proposed for development, perhaps as a windfarm or a new area of housing. In addition, field trips are built into the programme to allow students to see excellent examples of a variety of landscape professionals work. The visits are an invaluable way for you to learn about the realities of landscape architecture, to see the work of both contemporary and historical designers, and to gain inspiration from experience of what can be achieved.

Your design skills culminate in a major independent design project in semester four, the Final Landscape Project, allowing you to integrate the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired throughout the programme and demonstrate your readiness to enter the profession. This work will be central to an exhibition of your work, which takes place in June, alongside all the students in the School. The exhibition is opened to employers, providing a window to showcase your talents and to make connections with industry. The final element of your studies, the dissertation, can further employ design as a tool of research, or use social science, plant/environmental science or geographic methods to undertake an original research study, supervised by our industry leading research academics.

12. Assessment and feedback methods *(this should include the range of types of methods used and should be written with a student focus as this information will display to current students and applicants i.e. prospectus)*

The emphasis in the programme is on assessment by means of the submission of project work.

The school aims to:

- Tailor assessment to the achievement of overall programme aims and learning outcomes as well as module aims and learning outcomes.
- Foster the progressive development of knowledge and skills through formative feedback during the module, and test this through formal submissions of project work.
- Ensure that feedback on assessment is an integral part of student learning.
- Expose students to a diversity of assessment methods, thereby providing opportunities for development of a broad range of skills and abilities.
- Provide clear assessment criteria for individual modules in line with University and School guidance, so that students clearly understand how work is assessed, and how to achieve high standards.

Studio projects are a key part of the programme and allow students to demonstrate achievement in relation to their knowledge and understanding of landscape theory, process and practice, including manipulation of landscape elements through design, planning and management (K1, K3, K4, K5), as well as the skills they have developed, both those specific to landscape architecture (S1 to S6) and those transferable to other areas of work (S7 – S11).

Submissions for these projects include illustrations of concepts and solutions, portfolios, files showing development of ideas, observational journals of construction details and plant material, models, computer generated materials, and verbal presentations at review sessions.

Projects are frequently accompanied by written reports to develop students' abilities in communicating their proposals to professional and lay audiences (K4 and S6). Written assignments are used to test knowledge and understanding in areas relating to: landscape theories and histories, including design approaches and practices and the philosophies that underpin them (K2), the nature of landscape practice (K6), and research philosophies and methodologies (K7).

Project reports, including both written reports and graphic presentation of analysis and solutions, are used in developing knowledge, understanding and skills relevant to landscape planning (K6 and S5).

The Dissertation is designed to test students' knowledge and understanding of research methodologies (K8) and skills and abilities in successfully carrying out an in depth piece of independent research on a topic of their choosing (S6 and S11).

In general the transferable skills that are developed through the programme (S7 – S11) are not directly assessed but are rather an integral part of the work carried out. Completion of both design projects and project reports, for example, requires demonstration of all the transferable skills listed. Some projects also require group work skills and/or independent research. Written examinations are not a feature of this postgraduate programme.

Version Number:	**Purpose / Change:**	**Cohort affected: (academic year and level)**	**Date change approved:**

1			February 2022
2			March 2026
3	Major Amendment	27/28 - Year 1	September 2026

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