

MSc in Conservation of the Historic Environment

For students entering in 2010-11

Awarding Institution:	The University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	The College of Estate Management
Faculty:	Science
Programme length:	28 months
Date of Specification:	February 2011
Programme Directors:	Henry Russell (Internal) Stephen Bond (External)
Board of Studies:	CEM Board for Postgraduate Programmes
Accreditation:	The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Institute of Historic Building Conservation (full recognition)

Summary of Programme aims

The Programme is designed to develop the specialised skills, understanding and sensitivity of approach needed in caring for our architectural and cultural heritage. It considers the input of other professions and the conservation agencies, as well as that of the conservationist in practice, with the aim of equipping students to resolve more easily the conflicts that can be met in this area of work.

Transferable skills The University's Strategy for Teaching and Learning identifies a number of generic transferable skills which all students are expected to develop during their degree study.

The MSc is designed to enable students to develop their skills relating to communication, information handling, numeracy, problem-solving, self-management and use of information technology. Oral presentation skills will be encouraged within the limited parameters of the face-to-face elements of the distance-taught programme, but team working and collaborative learning are positively structured into online activities.

These transferable skills are developed progressively and in parallel with the specific subject competencies studied. The distance-learning nature of the Programme promotes self discipline, self-motivation and effective time management.

Programme structure and content

Structure

The MSc is delivered through supported distance-learning and extends over three academic years starting in June each year. The Programme is divided into three parts.

Part 1: Foundation and Fundamentals is a series of five modules (1–5) that set out the context of conservation of the historic environment and provide students with the fundamental skills required within the profession.

Part 2: Conservation in Practice consists of six modules (6–11) from which four must be selected. These explore specialist areas in more detail. A fifth module (12) is of an integrative nature and will consist of a project drawing together all the knowledge and skills developed in the course. Module 13 comprises the examination.

Part 3: Research consists of two modules and is structured for the student to complete a research methodology module before undertaking a dissertation that critically examines a specific aspect of conservation practice.

The structure and components are outlined in Table 1. Study is designed to meet the Quality Assurance Agency National Qualifications Framework for awards at level 7. In addition to the framework requirements, the design also takes account of professional body guidelines, specifically those issued by the RICS for accredited courses.

Content

The Programme comprises structured independent study, online interactivity, face-to-face teaching for a total of four days per year in two sessions (for each part), and formative and summative assessment. The summative assessment includes assignments, examinations and dissertation assessed by course tutors. The Programme will comprise 60 credits per year, totalling 180 credits.

All students studying for the MSc are required to complete a total of 13 prescribed modules. Each module carries an allocation of credits as set out in Table 1, with each credit equating to ten hours of combined study.

The formal research component of the programme is completed at Part 3. The taught Research Methods module and Dissertation together constitute 60 credits and require students to spend about 400 hours preparing their research dissertation.

Modular arrangements

Each module is designated credits at level 7. Parts 1 and 2 are designed as a stand-alone unit of study and are offered within a discrete distance-taught Diploma programme (with a dissertation replacing the integrative MSc Project).

TABLE 1: Components of the MSc in Conservation of the Historic Environment

PART 1: Foundation and Fundamentals

<u>Modules</u>	<u>Assessment</u>	<u>Weighting</u>	<u>Module Credits</u>	<u>Study Hours</u>	<u>Status</u>
Module 1: G101CPRR Understanding the Historic Environment	One assignment	100%	10 (level 6)	100	Compulsory

Module 2: G102HD Development of Design	One assignment	100%	10 (level 7)	100	Compulsory
Module 3: G103HBL Historic Buildings Legislation	One assignment	100%	10 (level 7)	100	Compulsory
Module 4: G104UCE Urban Conservation and Economics	One assignment	100%	10 (level 7)	100	Compulsory
Integrative Assessment					
G105INT Consolidation (Integrative assignment)	One assignment	100%	20 (level 7)	200	Compulsory
G107EXM Site Visit	3-hour exam	100%			
<u>PART 2 Conservation in Practice</u>					
Module 6: G205AT Practical Conservation Techniques: General Principles	One assignment	100%	10 (level 7)	100	Elective
Module 7: G206CCMS Practical Conservation Techniques: Materials and Repairs	One assignment	100%	10 (level 7)	100	Elective
Module 8: G207RHB Design in Historic Contexts	One assignment	100%	10 (level 7)	100	Elective
Module 9: G208PPM Procurement and Management of Building Conservation Projects	One assignment	100%	10 (level 7)	100	Elective
Module 10: G209FM Facilities Management of Historic Buildings	One assignment	100%	10 (level 7)	100	Elective
Module 11: G210HMCT Heritage Management and Cultural Tourism	One assignment	100%	10 (level 7)	100	Elective
Integrative Assessment					
GM220PRO Integrative Project	Extended Assignment	100%	10 (level 7)	100	Compulsory
G213EXM Site Visit	3½-hour exam	100%	10 (level 7)	100	Compulsory

PART 3

Module 14: GM301RM Research Methods	Two assignments (project based)	50% each	20 (level 7)	200	Compulsory for MSc
Module 15: GM302DIS Dissertation	One submission	100%	40 (level 7)	400	Compulsory for MSc

Progression requirements

The module pass mark is 50%. The Dissertation also has a pass mark of 50%. Up to a maximum of 55 credits at *below threshold standard (BTS)* (40-49%) can be carried forward to the calculation of the final masters award. The Dissertation cannot be included in this *below threshold standard* allowance. Failed modules, below 40 or below 50 for credits beyond the 55 credit allowance, are obliged to be retaken the following year.

Subject to the progression rules, a candidate who fails one or more modules will be entitled to two further opportunities to pass each module. For those retaking modules or postponing their course, it should be noted that there is a six year maximum course duration.

Summary of teaching and assessment

The MSc is distance-taught and makes use of a variety of pedagogic and assessment methods suited to this mode of study. All students will be required to have access to a computer and appropriate software applications, have an email address, and have access to the Internet. The Programme and module designs incorporate best practice in the design, delivery and support of online-enhanced distance-learning.

Teaching

Students entering the Programme have an appropriate professional or other suitable qualification, or have an extensive background in conservation of the historic environment, and are assumed to possess well-developed cognitive abilities and learning skills. Consequently it is anticipated that they can progress rapidly with their study. The Programme allows only a limited period of time for study of each subject area, enforcing a need to direct students' attention to the primary knowledge areas that affect and influence practice.

Problem-based learning (PBL)

In completing a Programme at master's level, students are expected to make sound judgements and be self-directed and original in solving problems. They must also be able to act autonomously, exercise personal responsibility, and be informed decision makers. These factors point to PBL as the most suitable approach to delivering the outcomes. The key is to have the transferable skills to question, develop, improve and extend knowledge in order to arrive at appropriate solutions.

A cornerstone of PBL is the use of learning materials through which students engage with problems in situations as near 'real life' as possible. By devising solutions to real life case

studies, problems or scenarios, students direct their own learning by identifying the necessary learning objectives. PBL means crossing disciplinary boundaries, and as part of the Programme students will work to define and solve problems applicable to their own workplace. Students will accomplish this by accessing research papers, reference materials specially written for them by Programme tutors, workplace documentation and technical information, with supporting tutor(s) acting as facilitator(s) of learning.

Structure of learning

The underlying structure of learning will be based on a programme of distance-learning supported by face-to-face days. Internal and external tutors will lead and present seminars and workshops, and distance-learning study materials and reference work will be supplemented by College on-line resources.

Online learning component

An educational aim of the Programme is to develop progressively the online learning skills of the student. Each module within the Programme will be included in the virtual learning environment (VLE) through which students can access academic and support staff, each other, and resources. Successful online learning includes the four components of dialogue, involvement, support and control.

Active *involvement* in study is at the heart of the Programme design and includes making responses to structured tasks, engagement with course materials, participation in student centred collaborations, and student direction of their own learning.

Support is considered in more detail below. At a learning level the Programme includes provision for periodic face-to-face teaching, online tutor access, peer support, advice from experts, and feedback on performance which is critical to the retention of students and maintenance of motivation.

MSc Dissertation Supervision

Supervisors will be selected in the light of a student's chosen topic, with the intention of matching their experience and academic skills with the subject areas chosen. Existing College academic staff are involved. The College is also able to call upon its extensive body of associate tutors, where they have appropriate qualifications.

Assessment

Assessment is in accordance with the University's Statutes and Ordinances.

As prescribed by the University of Reading, final awards for the Masters will be based upon the following criteria:

DISTINCTION: [A Weighted Average Mark of 70 or more over 180 credits
AND
a mark of 60 or more for the dissertation
AND
no credits below 40.]**OR :**

[A Weighted Average Mark of 68 or more over 180 credits
AND
a mark of 70 or more in at least 90 credits
AND
a mark of 60 or more for the dissertation
AND
no credits below 40.]

MERIT: [A Weighted Average Mark of 60 or more over 180 credits
AND
a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation
AND
no credits below 40.]**OR :**

[A Weighted Average Mark of 58 or more over 180 credits
AND
a mark of 60 or more in at least 90 credits
AND
a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation
AND
no credits below 40.]

PASS: [A Weighted Average Mark of 50 or more over 180 credits
AND
a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation
AND
no more than 55 credits below 50
AND
no credits below 40]**OR :**

[A Weighted Average Mark of 48 or more over 180 credits
AND
a mark of 50 or more in at least 90 credits
AND
a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation
AND
no more than 55 credits below 50
AND
no credits below 40.]

FAIL: A performance which fails to fulfil the criteria for the above classifications.

(Weighted average means the average of a student's module marks weighted according to the number of credit points for that module)

In addition, any requirement to retake a module disqualifies the student from gaining either merit or distinction awards. For fuller details of the assessment regulations consult the VLE.

Intermediate awards

Students can be awarded a University of Reading Postgraduate Diploma dependent upon the successful completion of 120 credits with a minimum of 80 credits at level 7 of the Masters Programme.

A Postgraduate Certificate will be awarded to students who achieve 60 credits with a minimum of 40 credits at level 7.

In each case, the award is **only** made if the course member leaves the programme after Year 2 or Year 1 respectively, or fails to achieve a pass grade in the following year and subsequently leaves the programme without being awarded the MSc.

However, if you are awarded the University of Reading Postgraduate Diploma you may, within three years, return your Diploma and complete the MSc study at Part 3.

Admission requirements

Entrants to the Programme are required to have obtained either:

- an undergraduate degree in any cognate or non-cognate discipline; or
- a relevant examined professional institute membership; or
- equivalent professional qualifications or extensive relevant experience.

Students will register for the MSc in Conservation of the Historic Environment during their Part 1 study at the time that they make their Part 2 module selections.

Candidates with lower qualifications may in exceptional circumstances have their case referred to the Faculty Director of Teaching and Learning. At the College's discretion, such candidates may be admitted on the Diploma course only.

English language

The language of instruction is English. For those students whose first language is not English, there is an English language requirement of at least one of the following:

- Grade B or above in English Language or English Literature at GCSE or its equivalent
- Grade 6.0 or above, with at least 6.5 in the reading and writing modules, in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test administered by the British Council in the Social Sciences academic module.
- 570 or above in the paper-based version, or 82 or above in the new internet option, of the Teaching of English as Foreign Language (TOEFL) test
- Grade C or above in Use of English at A/S Level Admissions arrangements

All applications are subject to approval by the College's Admissions Officer and the Programme Director.

Support for students and their learning

Students will have access to module tutors and support staff involved in the Programme through email and the virtual learning environment, through which they will also be able to contact other students studying the Programme. Each student will be provided with a comprehensive programme of studies for each module and a Programme handbook

containing full details of the course, modules, study techniques, and the administrative rules, regulations and procedures.

There will be four intensive face-to-face tuition days arranged at Reading during each calendar year for Parts 1 and 2, and two days for Part 3. These are recommended but not mandatory. Face-to-face tuition will also take place through site visits, which are designed to stimulate group discussion.

A workshop approach will be encouraged in order to help students develop their group working skills through online activity and the accelerated formation of a community of learners.

Student guidance and pastoral care is provided by the Course Director, and the Course Administrator and other administrative staff within the College. It is not anticipated that the University Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Adviser, Study Advisers or the Students' Union will be called upon to support the student's learning experience and welfare support.

Career prospects

Many students will be in relevant full-time employment before and during their studies, and will be seeking the award either for personal development, or to further their career prospects, or to gain membership of one of the professional institutions. Some students come from other disciplines, and have the capacity to gain the skills and knowledge to enter employment in the historic environment sector.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

Virtually all our students are in full-time employment. Overseas students get the chance to study in the UK for up to two weeks over the duration of the Programme.

Programme outcomes

The programme provides opportunities to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and other attributes, in the following areas:

Knowledge and understanding

A. On completion of the programme, students will have knowledge and understanding of the following subject matter:

1. The people, organisations and relationships in the heritage sector.
2. The philosophy underpinning approaches to conservation.
3. Researching and recording the historic environment.
4. The principles of law and the legal framework affecting the historic environment.
5. The relationship of the styles of English architectural history
6. The economic and urban issues which affect the historic environment.
7. The principal materials used in the conservation of buildings, their historic use and their repair today.
8. The design of new buildings in historic contexts and adaptations of historic buildings.
9. Contracts and procurement of works to historic buildings
10. Facilities management of historic buildings.
11. Issues concerning cultural tourism.
12. The research process, research methods and the presentation of results.

The outcomes will be delivered through the following teaching/learning methods and strategies:

- This programme adheres to best practice in the design and delivery of distance learning.
- The acquisition of knowledge is accomplished in each module of the programme through the provision of designed distance-learning resources including tailored reference materials, research reports, textbooks, web-based resources, and materials sourced by the student.
- Development of understanding and intellectual skills will occur through engaging the student in interactive learning activities designed for a problem-based learning approach. Exchanges with tutors and peers and access to resources will be enabled through the Blackboard virtual learning environment.
- Further support, advice, guidance and activity will occur through lectures, task-based syndicate groups, and a programme of site visits.
- In the dissertation module, self-directed learning and supervisor consultation will extend the student's knowledge, understanding and research skills

B. On completion of the programme a student will have knowledge and understanding of permutations of the following subject matter:

1. The ability to see a wider perspective and the contributions of all professions working on the historic environment.
2. Evaluation of the practices and methods of different organisations.
3. Understanding a building's stages of development through a knowledge of recording techniques and architectural history
4. Practical application of historic buildings law to particular buildings.
5. The impact of the Building Regulations, health and safety and other legislation on historic buildings.
6. The implications of being a historic building on property valuation, funding and finance.
7. An awareness of the needs of building users and occupiers, and the conflicts these often produce.
8. The design and engineering issues raised when new work or adaptations are proposed.
9. The use and application of conservation and management plans.
10. Application of methods of repair which are appropriate to a historic building, given its particular style and construction.
11. The application of the appropriate procurement methods in relation to the building/site and the type of work proposed.
12. The funding and available grants for a building conservation project.
13. How building preservation trusts operate, as single property trusts or revolving trusts.
14. Presenting historic environments to the public and the impact of tourism on the sites.



Assessment of the outcomes will be made by the following:

- Students are required to complete one piece of coursework for each module.
- Coursework assignments will require students to analyse a problem or situation, research it, and propose solutions based on critical analysis, in the form of extended essays or reports.
- Coursework will be assessed against defined criteria communicated to the students beforehand.
- The modules in Years 1 and 2 (excluding the integrated Year 2 assignment) are examined using a site visit followed by examination where students may refer to notes made on the site visit.
- Integration of concepts and principles between modules will be encouraged throughout the programme, and particularly in the integrated project of Year 2.
- Dissertations are assessed according to strict guidelines and a common marking scheme.

On completion of the Programme a student will be able to apply the following intellectual skills:

1. Integrate theory and practice relevant to their particular learning needs including the ability to transfer knowledge, techniques and methods between subject areas.
2. Research, collect and synthesise information from a variety of sources.
3. Analyse and interpret information presented in a variety of forms and formats.
4. Think logically and critically in respect of the appropriate application of knowledge developed experientially.
5. Reflect on and critically deconstruct workplace practices and procedures.
6. Define, solve and advise on problems, demonstrating powers of critical appraisal and synthesis.
7. Select and apply appropriate quantitative techniques of analysis and appraisal.
8. Plan, execute and write reports appropriate to an internal and external business client.
9. Adapt and apply knowledge and skills in a changing professional environment and within varying contexts.

The outcomes will be delivered through the following teaching/learning methods and strategies:

- The problem-based approach to learning will require the student to employ logic and intellectual skills in analysing problems, situations and scenarios. The student will then decide which solution is appropriate.
- The reference material to be drawn on includes study papers, text books and other recommended reading, as well as web-based resources and information found locally.
- The coursework and self-assessment varies across the modules but collectively covers skills 1–9.
- Feedback includes tutor comment on coursework, advice by email, telephone and direct conversation, and web-based answer guides.
- Web-based discussion boards within Moodle facilitate communication between students and tutors.
- The dissertation process embraces skills 1–7.

Assessment of these outcomes will be made by the following:

- Intellectual skills are assessed through coursework assignments, problems, reports and appraisals and through examination and dissertation.
- All summative assessment are made against defined criteria, including demonstration of intellectual skills.

On completion of the programme a student will be able to apply the following practical skills:

1. Locate information sources, assemble and present information in a variety of contexts and media.
2. Collate, manipulate and store data and information electronically.
3. Provide advice and guidance, communicating both formally and informally either face-to-face, through email or via discussion forum.
4. Collect, record, analyse and present statistical data.
5. Apply a variety of specialist analysis and appraisal techniques applicable to practice in the facilities management industry and profession.
6. Use quantitative techniques as a basis for decision making.
7. Write reports in clear standard English and draft comprehensible sketches and diagrams.
8. Multitask and prioritise work to meet scheduled deadlines.
9. Work collaboratively with other people to complete tasks to deadlines.

The outcomes will be delivered through the following teaching/learning methods and strategies:

- All skills will be developed through completing the module learning activities and coursework.
- In particular, Skills 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 are developed through the Dissertation Module.
- Skills 3–6 are variously developed in face-to-face tutorial discussions, web based activities and coursework within the taught modules.
- Skills 4–5 are further extended through the dissertation process.

Assessment of these outcomes will be made by:

- Assessment of these skills is mainly undertaken through module coursework.
- Skills 3, 5, 6, 8 and 9 will be displayed at face-to-face teaching sessions.
- Skills 4–7 are also assessed through examination.

On completion of the programme a student will be able to demonstrate the following transferable skills:

1. Communication skills
2. IT skills
3. Literacy
4. Numeracy
5. Problem-solving skills
6. Time management skills
7. Autonomous learning
8. Research skills
9. Business awareness



The outcomes will be delivered through the following teaching/learning methods and strategies:

- **Communication skills:** Whereas oral communication is limited by the medium of the Programme, written communication is central to the success of students in the Programme.
- **IT skills:** All MSc students are expected to have access to PCs, e-mail and the Internet. The Programme is supported by the open areas of the College web-site. More specifically, the dedicated *Moodle* virtual learning environment will be used to make learning activities and reference information available and significant use will be made of the discussion boards. Students have the option of submitting their coursework via the web. Completion of coursework will necessitate familiarity with Word and Excel. Support and advice on IT aspects of the course is available to students.
- **Literacy and Numeracy:** These not only relate to desirable minimum requirements for the Programme but are skills that are encouraged and developed through assignment tasks and tutor feedback on style as well as content. Completion of assessment requires a mixture of essays, calculation, reports, graphical presentations as well as dissertation writing. Guidance on the nature of these formats is provided throughout the course.
- **Problem-solving skills:** The fundamental pedagogy underpinning the design and delivery of the programme is centred on problem based learning with the student being introduced to topics through commonly found professional problems for which they must determine appropriate solutions.
- **Time management and autonomous learning:** By its nature distance learning requires students to develop the discipline of independent study. The flexibility on time, place and pace that it offers still requires students to manage their time to complete the required study and coursework by the milestone dates indicated in the programme of studies.
- **Research and business skills:** The programme is geared to the detailed examination of the facilities management industry and profession. During their study students will be expected to investigate and reflect on business practice and to source key documents and information from within their workplace. This enquiry skill developed to support study during the first two years will be formally converted into academic research skills in Part 3 when the taught research methods module is taken and the dissertation is completed.

Assessment of outcomes:

- To a greater or lesser degree all the coursework and much of the examination in this course will require the student to demonstrate each of these transferable skills. For instance, to complete an assignment they must manage their time, assimilate the problem information forming the assignment, conduct the required research or investigation of their workplace, discuss their findings, generate a solution, create a document with text and calculation, save and send the document electronically.

Please note: This specification provides a concise 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 he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in module descriptions and programme handbooks. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance processes or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances a revised specification will be issued.