

2012



School of Spatial Planning

MSc Sustainable Development

DT 118





School of Spatial Planning

Background & Context

The School of Spatial Planning

The Department of Environment and Planning offers a four year honours BSc programme giving students a professional qualification in the areas of either Spatial Planning or Environmental Management. The Department also runs four MSc programmes in the areas of Sustainable Development, Regional and Local Development, Planning and Development and Spatial Planning.

The MSc in Sustainable Development aims to produce the environmental professionals who can pursue actions and policies derived from evidence, experience and rigorous evaluation.

The programme aims and objectives are to provide graduates with the skills and ability to interpret principles of sustainable development and translate these into policy responses.

There is an option to take a part-time MSc in Sustainable Development over two years. A postgraduate diploma (one year or two years) or a postgraduate certificate in Sustainable Development are also offered.

MSc Sustainable Development Programme Objectives

The objective of the programme is to provide graduates from diverse disciplinary backgrounds with a detailed understanding of the most current, and emerging, concepts of sustainability and a high level of applied environmental knowledge and skills. Furthermore it is an objective to facilitate the development of high levels self-learning and self-evaluation. These competencies are intended prepare candidates to take up positions of leadership where they would have specific responsibility for environmental performance. The programme is not intended to produce environmental specialists but rather to equip professionals with the most current information, awareness, knowledge and understanding of how to optimally manage environmental factors while sustaining and enhancing society.

Part-time MSc, postgraduate Diploma or Certificates in Sustainable Development are offered to facilitate those currently employed or through other constraints unable to take on a full-time programme of study.

1.2 Staff & Specialisations

Name	Specialism
Dr Ken Boyle	Conservation and recreation management
Dr Marian Coll	Resource Management
Lorcan Mc Dermott	Social indicators of sustainable development
Louise Tracey	Planning Policy & Techniques
Dr. Alan Gilmer	Environmental Modeling
Dr. Eanna Ni Lamhna	Ecology in planning
Paul Lawlor	Planning Practice
Gerry Glynn	Management skills
Chris Reid	Communications
Conor Skehan	Impact Assessment
Conor Norton	Urban Design, Spatial Planning
Dave O'Connor	Transport and Urban design
Odran Reid	Community Development and Planning
Richard Webb	Environmental Management
Ciaran Cuffe	Urban Planning & Architecture

General Structure

The MSc Sustainable Development is a full time course that runs over 15 months at the DIT. Lectures take place on Wednesday, Thursday and Fridays in semesters 1 and 2. Mondays and Tuesdays are allocated to work placement.

The Programme is structured to provide a first semester of modules which ensure that all candidates are exposed to the most current thinking about the core topics of sustainable development – such as ecology, the socio-economic environment, environmental law and institutions etc – while ‘Techniques’ ensures that candidates are aware of the research and writing standards necessary for participation in an MSc programme. The first Semester is also used to prepare the candidate to select a Dissertation topic – largely though the ‘Research Conference’ (See below). Two modules – Case Studies and Sustainability in Practice – link the two semesters by providing opportunities to meet and visit examples of best practice – both in Ireland and abroad¹. The second semester consists almost entirely of optional modules that provide the candidate with exposure to modules they feel will develop an expertise in a particular aspect of sustainable development.

¹ Note that the Programme includes one trip during a Review Week (in semester 2) to visit another EU Member State.

In the initial phase of the programme students have an intensive and in depth introduction and review of sustainable development as applied and measured in Irish, European and global economies.

In semester 2 students develop an element of specialisation. Students are asked to select 4 modules worth 5 credits from the suit of modules available to the programme (See Optional modules for DT118 for module summaries.)

Research Conference

A formative element of the programme is a conference (in the latter half of Semester 1 at the DIT) at which the students address the key sectors of the economy relating work based on the environmental, social or economic elements of sustainable development. A speaker from an appropriate sector/industry is invited to provide a keynote address and the students then report on their research as it address current issues in sustainable development. The conference is organised by staff with the assistance of the students and the audience is industry, the public/state sector and or the general public. A final report amalgamates all the presentations for dissemination.

Admission requirements and procedures

The admission requirement for entry to the course is that the applicant must have an honours degree in any relevant discipline at 2.2 grade or higher, or equivalent. Mature applicants and those with a number of years work experience are encouraged to apply.

Curriculum and examinations

The programme is a 90 credit Masters programme. A total of 30 credits are assigned to the dissertation [25 for the dissertation and 5 for the work-placement element]. The remaining 60 credits are divided amongst 12 individual programme modules 6 of which are Core and 4 of which are Options selected from a suite of 9 modules.

Facilities Available

Accommodation

Accommodation for the programme is provided in the Bolton Street Complex. This includes the main Bolton Street DIT Building and the 'Zhivago' Building.

The Department of Environment and Planning is accommodated on the top floor of the 'Zhivago' Building and part of the second floor of this building.

The MSc Student computer lab is adjacent to room 2.1 on the second floor. There are kitchen facilities available for MSc Students at the rear of room 3.2 on the third floor.

Instrumentation & Laboratories

GIS and related specialist instruction and project work takes place in the School's GIS laboratory. This accommodates up to 20 students and is equipped with advanced GIS software, hardware – including large-scale printers and plotters - and digital data for departmental research activities

Central Library Resource

Each of the DIT centres is equipped with a library containing modern lending and research facilities. Approximately 170,000 volumes are held and about 1,000 periodicals are subscribed to. The central library system is based in DIT Aungier St. and an automated library management system is in place at all DIT campus sites. Students may query and search for texts only *via* DITNET. All volumes are bar coded and lending facilities are controlled and managed by the system.

DIT, Bolton St. Library Resource

At DIT Bolton Street, the library has 420 seats, contains *circa* 40,000 volumes and subscribes to about 400 current periodicals. In addition, it has CDROM data bases, access to the internet, microfiche, maps, videos, slides and photocopying services.

Part-time options

As of January 2012 it is possible to take a part-time MSc (90 ECT), Postgraduate Diploma (60 ECT) or Postgraduate Certificate (30 ECT) in Sustainable Development. To facilitate part-time students lectures in semester 1 will be time-tabled so that students spend one day per week (Thursday or Friday) at lectures. In semester 2 students take two or three Option (elective) modules. The timing of core and option module and ECT credit ratings are outlined in table 1. A brief description of modules follows the table. A full outline of each module is available at the DIT website at Coursewise: <http://www.lttc.ie/coursewise/>

Year 1 Semester 1 and 2		
Module title	SSPL Code	ECT Credits
Core modules		
Society and Sustainable Development ^{††}	SSPL9062	5 credits
Ecology ^{††}	SSPL9028	5 credits
Economy and Sustainable Development ^{††}	SSPL9035	5 credits
Prior learning/work experience		10 credits (compulsory on MSc & Diploma)
2/3 Option modules in semester 2	Code varies*	10/15 credits
* See option modules list for codes		
^{††} PG Cert core modules		
Year 2 Semester 1 and 2		
Core modules		
Research Techniques	SSPL9006	5 credits
Transport and Urban Development	SSPL9014	5 credits
Work Experience #	SSPL9057	5 credits
2/3 Option modules in semester 2	Code varies*	10/15 credits
Dissertation #	SSPL9056	25 credits
# Modules for part time MSc only		

Table 1 DT118 Part time MSc, postgraduate diploma and certificate module codes and ECT credits

CORE MODULES DT 118 MSc in Sustainable Development

These modules run in the first semester unless indicated otherwise

Society and Sustainable Development (5 credits) Introduces the learner to the socio-political and ethical issues integral to the study of sustainable development. The module introduces the learner to the key concepts and theories of politics, ethics, sociology, and social policy.

Research Techniques (5 credits) Provides the skills to understand sources of information, data analysis and computation relevant to research. It also prepares the student for writing the dissertation

Transport and Urban Development (5 credits) An overview of policy tools available to develop a comprehensive policy aimed at achieving sustainable mobility patterns and insight into how transport infrastructure can be used to shape urban development and influence real estate investment.

Ecology (5 credits) Provides an awareness and understanding of various areas of human activity and processes and how these impact on the natural environment.

Environmental Law and Institutions II (5 credits) Provides a proper understanding of environmental legislation and its impact on the process of monitoring and guiding the development process

Sustainability and development in Practice (5 credits) This module is a forum for exploration of contemporary issues in sustainability and regional development through site visits in Ireland and Europe.

Case studies in Sustainability (5 credits) A series of lectures from practitioners in the field of sustainable development.

Economy and Sustainable; Development (5 credits) An introduction to the concepts and theories of economics. The module uses contemporary examples in Ireland and internationally to analyze the relationship between economics and sustainable development.

Dissertation (25 credits) Semester 1 and 2 This is a self directed learning module which is reported in a dissertation between 15,000 and 20,000 words. The dissertation will be an original piece of work by the student on a research topic relevant to the theme of Sustainable Development.

Progress and Placement (5 credits) Semester 1 and 2

Each student is required to spend a minimum of 14 hours per week for 16 weeks in an approved and monitored work placement.

OPTIONAL MODULES in Sustainable Development

Students select 4 of these modules for semester 2 (Part-time students select 2 or 3)

Technology and Infrastructure II B (5 credits)

The module aims to familiarize the learner with documentation and construction techniques commonly used by the construction sector and provide an understanding of key issues, relating to energy conservation techniques.

Environmental Management Plans II (5 credits)

The students work as a team or teams to develop a management plan of an extensive habitat or network of habitats that considers a number of scenarios such as intensification of tourism, extensification or agriculture, strict protection of habitats.

Environmental Design and Management (5 credits)

This module presents a holistic and integrated approach to design, at household, settlement, city or regional level. The module explores new ways in which resources can be used more effectively and efficiently. The module contains a separate component dealing with sustainable building design in the area of energy. .

Environmental Modeling (5 credits)

This module addresses the basic principles of systems analysis and environmental modeling. The module introduces the student to the fundamental principles of system dynamics, the theoretical context of model development, the modeling process and the general approach to model construction.

Entrepreneurship (5 credits)

To 'make development happen' is often dependent on local business initiatives the success of which is usually because of shrewd appraisal of market opportunities, ability to take risks, and use of supporting structures. The module explores the key issues in bringing ideas into successful business concepts.

EU Policy (5 credits)

Examination of theories and practice of regional development.

Local Development and Project Appraisal (5 credits)

A critical evaluation of how local and regional developments are implemented having regard to the principles of sustainable development.

Management Studies (5 credits)

The module provides an introduction to managerial effectiveness and behaviour which will assist the student improve their organisational performance through the better use and the management of human resources.

Spatial Data Assessment (5 credits)

The module presents an overview of methods for the assessment of spatial data including geographic information systems and related technologies to enable the learner to appreciate their usefulness in the complex and multifaceted task of sustainable development.

Frequently asked questions MSc Sustainable Development

What are the fees for the MSc Sustainable Development programme?

Fees for postgraduate courses are reviewed on an annual basis. Please check the current fees at <http://www.dit.ie/study/postgraduate/feesandfunding/list/>

What is the closing date for applications?

The closing date for application to the SD DT118 programme is in April. Applications should be made directly to graduate studies. Copies of the application forms and details on fees etc are available on the DIT web site at: <http://www.dit.ie/study/postgraduate/howtoapply/>
It is possible to enter the part-time programme in either September or January (see website for applications).

What are the entry requirements for the course?

The minimum qualification is a 2.2 honours primary degree

We do place value on work experience particularly if gained after graduation.

In exceptional circumstances students not qualifying on academic grounds but with strong work experience can, following an interview, be offered a place on the programme.

Part-time MSc and Diploma candidates must show prior learning and work experience on entry to the programme and gain 10 ECT credits for this.

Who studies Sustainable Development?

Graduated from a broad range of courses arts, business/economics, engineering, architecture, communications, geography or the social sciences and science have enrolled on the course.

Where do graduates of the course get employment?

There is no definitive area of employment for graduates of the programme. Generally students tend to seek or get employment with the skills they developed in their primary degree but with the added advantage of having an in depth understanding of the process and application of sustainable development to environmental, economic or social sectors. With work placement and a suitable research dissertation you could develop the skills needed to help focus your career in a sector that is of particular interest to you.

How is work placement organized?

Students must do a work placement of two day per week over a minimum of 16 weeks with an approved employer. Monday and Tuesday are free to facilitate this and lectures are on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

We ask students on the SD MSc programme to identify potential employers and to arrange work placement themselves. This process is facilitated through a letter of introduction and a list of past work experience places kept by the department.

Work experience is generally unpaid.