

RICS Postgraduate Diploma in Project Management For students continuing in: March 2016

Awarding Institution:	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
Teaching Institution:	University College of Estate Management (UCEM)
Date of specification:	March 2016
Programme Leader:	Dr Bekie Mpofu
Board of Studies:	UCEM Postgraduate Board of Studies

Summary of programme aims

The RICS Postgraduate Diploma in Project Management is designed to provide students with an advanced academic understanding of construction project management, or development processes within a global arena. The programme targets a worldwide audience of professionals engaged in, or aspiring to, the management of any aspect associated with construction development, whether for a public or private client and medium or large in scale. This includes infrastructure works, commercial offices and shopping centres, residential and public works.

Transferable skills

UCEM has identified a number of generic transferable skills which all students are expected to develop during their postgraduate programme, by the end of which students will have developed skills relating to communication, information handling, numeracy, problem-solving, leadership, negotiation, mediation skills and use of information technology. Oral presentation skills and team working will be encouraged within the limited parameters of the face-to-face elements of the distance-taught programme. These transferable skills are developed in tandem with the specific subject skills of the Programme.

Programme Structure and content

The Postgraduate Diploma in Project Management programme extends over two years, taught by distance learning, starting in either September or March each year. The course of studies has been structured to meet the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) National Qualifications Framework award at Master's level. The Programme is divided into directed private study, with assignments assessed by the programme tutors. Students are likely to allocate approximately 13 hours a week to studies for 46 weeks of each of the two years. A minimum of 10 hours a week is expected for completion of the coursework (assignments). All students are required to take all the modules which carry an allocation of credits (given in brackets after each module code), each credit equating to some ten hours of study.

The eight compulsory modules comprise:

Part 1

SEMESTER B

Managerial Accounting (15 credits)
Organisation & People Management (15 credits)

SEMESTER A

Management Science (15 credits)
Marketing Principles and Strategy (15 credits)

Part 2

SEMESTER B

Development Finance and Appraisal (15 credits)
Strategic Management/Management of Change & Innovation
(15 credits)

SEMESTER A

Development Strategy and Procedure (15 credits)
Knowledge Management/Portfolio Management (15
credits)

Modular arrangements

The course Programme is designed for students who are mainly fully employed in the construction and real estate industry. Each module is allocated credits (e.g.15) designated at level 7. As such, the modules are amenable to integration into a wider suite of distance taught courses. Similarly the Programme may be adapted in the future to contain a group of alternative modules in addition to compulsory core modules.

Progression requirements

Each of the taught modules is made up of equally weighted coursework and examination components. Students must achieve marks of 40% or more in both coursework and examination, but a minimum of 50% is required as the module pass mark.

Up to a maximum of 55 credits at *Below Threshold Standard (BTS)* (40-49%) can be carried forward to the calculation of the final postgraduate award. Failures, below 40 or below 50 for credits beyond the 55 credit allowance, are obliged to retake the module the following year. The award of the Postgraduate Diploma will be dependent upon the successful completion of 120 credits with a minimum of 80 credits at level 7 of the Master's Programme.

Summary of teaching and assessment

The Programme is distance-taught and, as such, the variety of pedagogic and assessment methods consists of assignments, workshop lectures and syndicate exercises, both face to face and personal online tutorials, online open forums with web assistance, study material in hard copy, CD and online formats and unseen written examinations. There are two residential courses in each year, one per semester. These intensive periods provide for group work and student presentations, as well as conventional lectures from University, University College and industry guest speakers. The coursework includes two substantial assignments for each taught module. They are designed to test the students' understanding of a significant proportion of the syllabus content that is prescribed in a *Programme of Studies* and are assessed by the course tutors. Formal unseen examinations are held at the end of each semester (February and August), all of which are subject to External Examiner review.

Admission requirements

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained either a good cognate undergraduate degree and/or have relevant work experience for AP(E)L entry. The Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning criteria for entry to the Postgraduate Diploma in Project Management programme will be determined by cognateness of the undergraduate award or similar tertiary qualification. It is recommended that applicants for AP(E)L have appropriate work experience in a position which has a responsibility for managing people, and an academic qualification equivalent to that of an HNC/D or higher. Applications from suitably qualified candidates living or practising overseas are welcomed, subject to a competency assessment in English language. The suitability of each candidate's application and qualifications will be decided at the discretion of the Programme Leader.

Support for students and their learning

Learning support is provided by the University College and includes both written study material and web-based learning, which provides additional support from tutors, access to University College research reports, Athens, course material and discussion groups. All students with access to a PC and the internet can access the online support provided. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by the Programme Leader, Programme Administrator, the University College's Special Needs Advisor, IT Support Desk and Learning Materials Coordinator.

Career prospects

Nearly 100% of Programme students to date have the benefit of full time employment during their studies, and have been seeking the award to further career prospects. Graduates have furthered career prospects within national and international real estate or consultancy practices, and construction and development organisations operating worldwide, as well as in government and academic departments.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

Candidates from over fifteen countries are regularly present on the course and this demonstrates the true global attraction and nature of this international programme. Virtually all our students are in full time employment. Overseas students have the chance to study in the UK for up to 2 weeks over the course of the programme.

Educational aims of the programme

The Programme is designed to provide students with an advanced academic understanding of construction and real estate processes with a particular emphasis on international development activity. There is emphasis on developing advanced professional skills for those in employment, and enhancing ongoing career prospects. In Part 1, students will advance their knowledge and skills in areas such as managerial accounting, marketing, management science and organisation and people management. In Part 2, the management and analysis of the development process is closely considered, together with knowledge management, managing change, strategic management, development finance and portfolio management.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

- 1) Data presentation and interpretation
- 2) Principles of corporate finance relevant to real estate investment
- 3) Research techniques & their application to construction and real estate problems
- 4) The role of real estate in corporate asset management
- 5) Principles of marketing in a construction and real estate context.
- 6) Principles and application of financial and managerial accounting.
- 7) Structures and methodologies of organisations and the behaviour within them.
- 8) Understanding & dealing with risk.
- 9) The strategic processes associated with the major commercial developments.
- 10) The principles of effective management of human resources.
- 11) The key concepts and processes involved in knowledge management.
- 12) The key principles concerning the management of change and innovation.
- 13) The objectives, theory and strategy of investments portfolio management.
- 14) The role of corporate strategic management within the construction and real estate industries.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Acquisition of knowledge in the modules of the Programme is promoted through distance education resources, including customised text material, core textbooks, and web-based material and communication channels. These are complemented and supplemented by tutorials, guest lectures, seminars and team project work in face-to-face sessions.

Assessment

Students are required to complete extensive pieces of coursework in the modules, which are assessed within strict timeframes. Modules are also examined using the unseen closed book method.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills – able to:

- 1) Integrate theory and practice.
- 2) Market research, collect and synthesise information from a variety of sources.
- 3) Analyse and interpret.
- 4) Think logically and critically.
- 5) Define, solve and advise on problems.
- 6) Select and apply appropriate quantitative techniques of analysis and appraisal.
- 7) Write clearly and concisely at a professional level.
- 8) Adapt and apply knowledge and skills in a changing professional environment and to other contexts.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

These skills are developed through prescribed reading, seminars, coursework and detailed feedback. The reading includes core texts, papers and relevant web-based material.

Coursework varies across the modules, but collectively covers skills 1-8. Feedback includes direct coursework comment, e-mailed advice and web-based answer

guides. Web-based discussion/forums between tutors and students are also facilitated.

Assessment

Intellectual skills are assessed through coursework assignments, problems, reports and appraisals, plus unseen examinations and dissertation production.

C. Practical skills – able to:

- 1) Locate information sources, assemble and present information in a variety of contexts.
- 2) Collect, record, analyse and present statistical material
- 3) Adopt appraisal techniques for real estate and other assets.
- 4) Use quantitative techniques
- 5) Write and report in standard English.
- 6) Assess and analyse techniques of team building.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Skills 1-2 are developed throughout the modules, assisted by the techniques learnt in management science. Detailed guidelines are provided and explained on the VLE and in seminar sessions.

Skills 3-6 are variously developed in face-to-face syndicate exercises and coursework within the taught modules.

Assessment

Relevant assessment of these skills is undertaken mainly through module coursework. Skills 3-6 are also assessed through unseen examination.

D. Transferable skills – able to:

- 1) Develop the capacity to analyse and articulate the complex management issues in the construction and real estate environment
- 2) Assess what knowledge is transferable from other context into the management approaches within this working context
- 3) Be confident in applying learning experience to practical management situations
- 4) Source material and knowledge from a variety of fields and effectively judge what can be integrated and applied
- 5) Attain and apply knowledge and information that will help develop their career.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Ideas and issues are evaluated in depth through VLE discussion, seminar discussion and problem solving exercises – which are conducted individually and in groups – plus coursework, which is done by internalising these aspects separately and together through different learning methods.

Assessment

Coursework provides the main means of assessing how the introduction and development of these skills is progressing. The coursework will assess the skills aspect to a general level of transfer appropriate at postgraduate Master's Level.

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, and the learning

and assessment methods of each module can be found in the Student Handbook and on the VLE. The University College 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.