



Graduate School of the Environment Student Progression Rules

1. Introduction

1.1. The Graduate School of the Environment (GSE) makes every effort to ensure that all students successfully complete their course and no student progresses to subsequent modules or dissertation without being prepared and ready to do so, or where the necessary workload to address module failure would be excessive.

1.2. GSE offers Masters level postgraduate courses in collaboration with two awarding universities: the University of East London (UEL) and Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU). This document describes the approach GSE uses to underpin student progression, which is consistent with the Academic Regulations of our partner universities.

2. Time Limits for Study

2.1. For programmes validated by UEL* the normal time limit for completion of a programme is three years in full time mode, and six years in part time mode after first enrolment on the course (see UEL Academic Regulations part 3b, 9.2.2). Normally these time limits will only be extended to reflect any extenuating circumstances that have not been previously considered. *see Appendix for UEL course list.

2.2. For programmes validated by LJMU* the normal time limit for completion of a programme is 18 months full time and 33 months in part time mode. LJMU regulations specify no prescribed maximum time limits allowed for students enrolled on programmes validated by LJMU but there are restrictions on the taking of authorised study breaks (Leave of Absence) which limit the time for completion. This means that for a LJMU programme the time limit for study is also normally 6 years. *see Appendix for LJMU course list.

3. Workload

3.1. GSE recognises its duty of care in ensuring that no student is overloaded with work, nor so disengaged with the course as to become detached from it. All Graduate School courses are modular and uses the standard multiplier of 1 credit for learning outcomes achievable in 10 hours of learning time at Level 7 (MSc, M.Res and M.Arch)

3.2. In general:

- **Full time MSc students** should aim to complete all of their taught modules (120 credits) within the first academic year of study after enrolling on a course and must attempt at least 90 credits in their first year of study (otherwise they will automatically be moved to part time).
- **Part-time MSc students** should aim to complete all of their taught modules (120 credits) within the two academic years of study after enrolling on a course and it is recommended that student attempt 60 credits in each year. Part-time students should attempt no more than 75 credits in any one academic year.
- **All MSc students** should attempt no fewer than 45 credits in any one academic year, and no more than 90 credits in any one term (Note: UEL students need to intermit if they do not take any credits during a term). Should a student have to withdraw from a module at short notice, registration for the module will be carried over to the next academic year and any payment will be credited to their account. With the exception of the ARD module, a student can study 15 credits of deferred modules alongside the dissertation. The ARD module (EV7125/7521CATSCI) is a prerequisite for the dissertation. It is not permissible to start the dissertation if the ARD module has been deferred.
- **All M.Res students** should complete all taught modules including the Applied Research Design module prior to undertaking the extended 120 credit M.Res dissertation. Full time M.Res students should aim to complete their course in 2 years, and part time students within 3 years.
- **M.Arch students** should aim to complete all of their taught modules (240 credits) across two academic years (or three years if studying part time). It is possible to move from full-time to part-time study and vice-versa to accommodate any external factors such as financial constraints or domestic commitments. Part Time study is considered differently to full time study for the M.Arch by Student Finance England and Wales and should be factored into decisions for changes in study mode.

4. Student Progression – General & Programme Specific Rules

4.1. Monitoring student progression and outcomes is an essential part of ensuring that GSE achieves its teaching and learning aims, and the following rules are applied:

No module can be a prerequisite to enable completion of another taught module;

One or more modules can be specified as a prerequisite before a student can move onto the dissertation / research module. Ideally a student will have attended all taught modules before embarking on the dissertation, unless exceptionally allowed by Programme Leader or Head of School

A student cannot continue on a course if they have not achieved a pass in the reassessment of a repeated core module or the final module attempt (LJMU programmes) for the course.

The pass mark for level 7 modules is 50% or a 'pass' grade. All summative assessment items must be attempted before credit is released

4.2 M.Arch Sustainable Architecture Programme

The M.Arch is a blended learning course, in order to succeed on the course it requires students to actively engage with teaching and learning activities on site as well as online tutorials and workshops. It is an expectation that students attend a minimum of 75% of onsite activities throughout the course.

4.2.1. To begin the Final Design Project students must have successfully completed the following modules:

- Integrated Design Project 1
- Integrated Design Project 2
- Architectural Analysis through Writing

4.2.2. In exceptional circumstances, the Head of School or M.Arch Sustainable Architecture Programme Leader may permit a student to progress to the final design project without having successfully completed these listed modules.

4.3. UEL MSc and M.Res Programmes

4.3.1 GSE students enrolled on UEL MSc courses since 2022 (see Appendix) are required to participate in the £V7125 Applied Research Design module and submit a satisfactory Research Design Proposal (RDP) prior to commencing the Dissertation

4.3.2 GSE students enrolled on UEL MSc (see Appendix) before 2022 are required to submit a satisfactory Research Design Proposal (RDP) prior to commencing the Dissertation. It is recommended that they attend the dissertation weekend or the Applied Research Design Module.

4.3.3. If a student struggles to complete the taught modules or does not submit a satisfactory RDP, GSE may recommend that they withdraw and take an early award e.g. PG Cert or PG Dip, dependent upon the number of credits achieved and modules meeting the programme specifications for the Pg Cert and Pg Dip awards.

4.4 LJMU MSc Programme

4.4.1. GSE students enrolled on LJMU MSc courses before 2022 (see Appendix) are required to participate in a Research Methods Workshops and submit a satisfactory Research Design Proposal (RDP) prior to commencing the Dissertation.

4.4.2. GSE students enrolled on LJMU MSc courses since 2022 (see Appendix) are required to participate in the 7521CATSCI Applied Research Design module and submit a satisfactory Research Design Proposal (RDP) prior to commencing the Dissertation.

4.4.3. If a student struggles to complete the taught modules or does not submit a satisfactory RDP, GSE may recommend that they withdraw and take an early award e.g. PG Cert or PG Dip, dependent upon the number of credits achieved, and modules meeting the programme specifications for the Pg Cert and Pg Dip awards.

4.4.4. Students are required to attempt all items of summative assessment at the appointed time as a condition of the award of credit. Failure to do so will be deemed by the Board of Examiners to constitute failure in the module unless a claim for Extenuating Circumstances or Special Mitigation is found valid.

4.4.5. If a student fails to gain the credits for a module at the second attempt, they may be eligible for an Exceptional Second Referral (ESR) for up to 20 credits, but in order to be eligible for an ESR they need to have achieved 100 credits at that level. If eligible, they will have a third attempt at the assessment.

4.4.6. Where a student is not eligible for an ESR, they will not be able to progress onto the next level and will be advised about available options, this may include an opportunity to reregister for a Final Module Attempt (FMA). In the event of FMA, module attendance is compulsory. The maximum mark obtainable from a referral, ESR or FMA is the minimum pass mark for the module.

Note: some modules may not be eligible for Exceptional Second Referrals or Final Module Attempts. These are usually modules related to professional competency requirements.

5. Progression from Intermediate Awards

5.1. For students enrolled on one of the intermediate awards, progression to study towards higher awards will be permissible if they express an interest before the completion of the award they are enrolled on, and subject to additional fees as applicable at the time and entry and admissions requirement, including any professional body requirements. In these circumstances the intermediate qualification will be assimilated into the higher award, rather than the award of two separate qualifications.

5.2. For students who have been awarded one of the intermediate awards, programme entry to study towards higher awards will be subject to entry and admissions requirements and the associated fees as applicable at the time. In these cases, they will be able to apply for the recognition of credits achieved from the completed intermediate award in accordance GSE's Admissions Policy.

6. Study Breaks

The terminology used by UEL and LJMU for study breaks varies. UEL use the term 'Intermission' and LJMU 'Leave of Absence'. Subject to the differences shown below due to differences in university regulations the principles of study break are the same for all students.

6.1 UEL Students – Intermission.

UEL students who have no modules booked within a term (Term 1:Sept-Dec, term 2: Jan-July) must take intermission. UEL Students may use up to 4 terms (2 years) of intermission during their studies. Intermission should be applied for using the form within the GSE forms hub and is approved by the programme leader. All deadlines remain active during a period of intermission. Intermission can be applied for using the GSE forms hub.

6.2 LJMU Students – Leave of Absence.

LJMU students who have no modules booked within a term (Term 1:Sept-Dec, Term 2:Jan-July) must take a Leave of Absence. Normally, Leave of Absence will start in either September or January and the student will return to study the following September. Students may not go on Leave of Absence if they have outstanding deadlines. In this instance, the Leave of Absence start date will be 4 weeks following the outstanding submission deadline. Leave of Absence will normally last for 1 year at a time and can be applied for using the GSE forms hub. LJMU Students may use up to 2 years of intermission during their studies.

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Appendix: GSE Courses & Awarding Universities

GSE courses are delivered entirely by GSE but are validated and awarded by our collaborative partners, as follows:

Master of Science (MSc) Programmes

The following programmes are delivered in collaboration with the University of East London (UEL):

- MSc Sustainability and Adaptation;
- MSc Sustainability in Energy Provision and Demand Management;
- MSc Green Building.

The following courses are validated by UEL and are on 'teach out' until 2026

- MSc Sustainability and Adaptation: Planning;
- MSc Sustainability and Adaptation in the Built Environment;

The following programmes are delivered in collaboration with Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU):

- MSc Sustainability and Behaviour Change;
- MSc Sustainability and Ecology;
- MSc Sustainable Food and Natural Resources.

Master of Architecture (M.Arch) Programme

The M.Arch Sustainable Architecture (M.Arch SA) programme is delivered in collaboration with the University of East London (UEL).

Master of Research (M.Res)

The following programmes is delivered in collaboration with the University of East London (UEL):

- M.Res Sustainability and Adaptation.