

Rural Planning and Environmental Assessment	
Module Ref No:	TBC
Date of Validation:	2020
SCQF Level:	9
SCQF Credits:	15

1. Rationale	
<p>All those involved with the management, development and use of the countryside require an understanding of how the planning system works and what it is intended to achieve. This module will concentrate on the modernised Scottish planning system, why it is necessary and appraising its role in determining the way in which rural areas are developed with a focus on promoting the sustainable management of the countryside. The use of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) are key processes which are fully integrated into the current planning system. By looking critically at the process, students will gain an insight into how planning decisions are made and how they can contribute to the sustainable management of the countryside. In addition to looking at case studies, site visits will link the strategic policy framework with the individual planning requirements of a range of topical planning application proposals and developments</p>	
2. Learning Outcomes	
At the conclusion of this module the student should be able to:	
L01:	Analyse the development and motivation of the planning system.
L02:	Appraise the role of the planning system in controlling development and implementing local and national government policy, in particular the sustainable management of the countryside.
L03:	Evaluate the process of policy tools in controlling development and promoting Scottish Government policy.
L04:	Evaluate the role of environmental assessment processes including Environmental Impact Assessment, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment
3. Content	
3.1	Development and motivation of the planning system Need for a system of planning; development of urban centres; Town and Country Planning Acts and Planning Etc. (Scotland) Act; the urban/rural split; role of planning in rural land use (e.g. agriculture and forestry); planning since Scottish devolution and the Scottish Planning Bill.
3.2	Role of the planning system and government guidance, National Planning Framework, Scottish Planning Policy; Planning and key policy drivers (e.g. climate change), role of the local authority; local and strategic plans & decision-making in the planning process; precautionary principle; sustainable development; environmental assessment.
3.3	Role of EIA (screening & scoping studies; impact and mitigation), development and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA); and Habitat Regulation Appraisal (HRA) effectiveness in controlling development and promoting local and national policy objectives.
3.4	Case studies (for example) might include the A9 dualling, AWPR development, Forth Road Replacement Crossing, Aberdeen Harbour, renewables developments, Beaully-Denny Transmission Pipeline and anything that might arise of a topical nature.
3.5	Topic areas, where possible, to be linked to local campus specific case studies, i.e. RE - Whitelee Wind farm.
4. Approaches to Learning and Teaching	
Notional Study Hours:	

Typically, students will have to undertake about **150hrs** of study to successfully achieve the learning outcomes for this module; this will be made up of a combination of both scheduled and independent study as indicated below.

Scheduled Study: Typically consisting of:	35hrs
Lectures	17.5
Tutorials	7
Seminars	3.5
External Visits	7
Independent Study:	110hrs

5. Graduate Attributes

Opportunity to develop the following aspects of graduate attributes will be included within this module:

Graduate Attribute	Learning Activity and Aspect Developed
1. Academically competent	By formative and summative research assessments students will develop knowledge and understanding of the role of planning and environmental assessment in delivering sustainable development.
2. Critical thinker	Through reviewing EIA students will evaluate literature and current planning practice, to identify gaps in knowledge, problems encountered from the planning process and synergies.
3. Desire for learning and personal development	Through class discussion openness to, and an interest in, lifelong learning through both directed and independent study through assigned reading and a focus on local case studies
4. Responsible member of society	Through lecture and site visit understanding of the local and national drivers which inform development of Government planning policy. Further, to understand the principles of environmental assessment and planning tools in informing decision making within the planning process through assigned reading lists
5. Employability/ Knowledge transfer	Through formative presentations students will gain professional/academic knowledge, and will gain skills (e.g. using literature, scientific writing, and delivering seminars) that will be valuable in the workplace.

6. Assessment

This module will be assessed using the following methods:

Assessment Method	Contribution to Grade (%)	Nature of Assessment
Written Exam	40	Assessed presentation on an assigned environmental assessments, based on sustainability of practice.
Investigative report	60	2500 word investigation on use of government policy transposed into the planning system and development in supporting sustainability, examples may include climate change (LO1, LO2 & LO3) OR The assessment will normally take the form of an evaluation of a particular aspect of current planning interest, such a renewable energy project or sustainable development issue.

7. Reading. Additional articles on selected topics are provided for students on Moodle.

Required:

IEMA. *EIA Guide to Delivering Quality Development* - <https://www.iema.net/assets/newbuild/documents/Delivering%20Quality%20Development.pdf>
 Scottish Government. *SEA Guidance* - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/strategic-environmental-assessment-guidance/>
 Cullingworth.J.B. (2014) *Town and Country Planning in the UK*. Routledge: London
 UK Government Appropriate Assessment Guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/appropriate-assessment>
 Nature Scotland Habitats Regulation Appraisal Help and Advice - <https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/planning-and-development/environmental-assessment/habitats-regulations-appraisal-hra/habitats-regulations-appraisal-hra-help-and>
 The handbook from SNH on EIA 2018 - <https://www.nature.scot/handbook-environmental-impact-assessment-guidance-competent-authorities-consultees-and-others>
Relevant websites will be added to this core reading as legislation develops, namely the Planning Scotland Act 2019

Additional:

In addition to the above reading:

Healey.P. (2010). *Making Better Places: The Planning Project in the Twenty-First Century*. Springer: England

Transport Scotland. (2020). *Project*. <https://www.transport.gov.scot/projects/>

IEMA website (environmental management systems, auditing and environmental impact assessment).

8. Staff

Module Leader:	Marcus Craigie (Ayr), Amy Gray (Aberdeen), Madeleine Bell (Edinburgh)
Other contributing staff:	