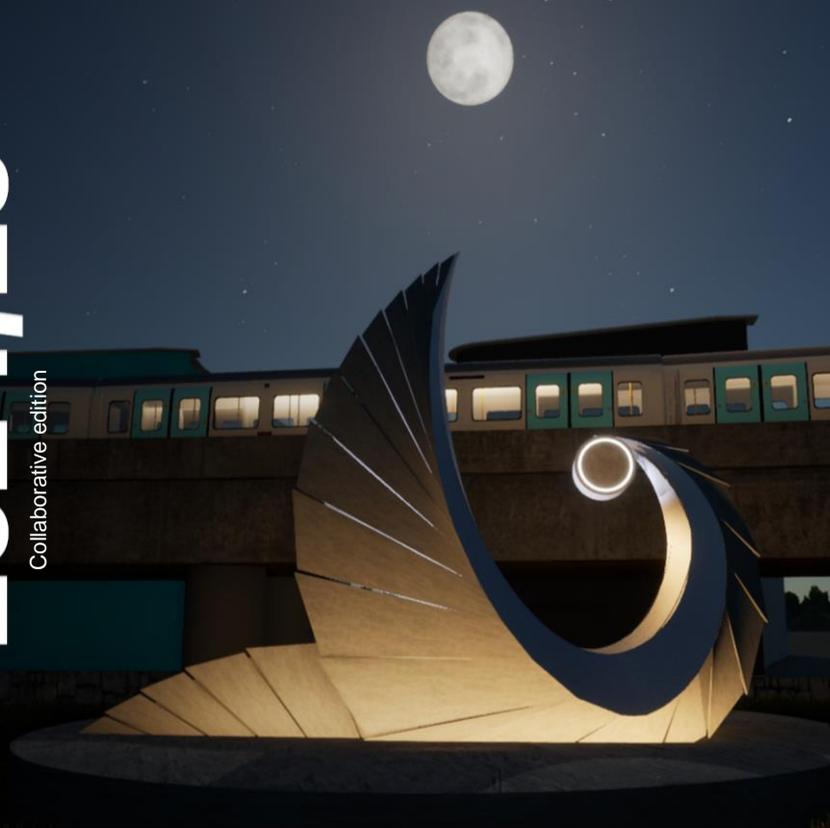


# MRes Sustainability and Adaptation

Centre for Alternative Technology

# COURSE HANDBOOK 2024/25

Collaborative edition



University of  
East London

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## ACCESSIBILITY NOTICE

[Click here for guidance on viewing this document in Word's Immersive Reader](#)

### DOCUMENT CONTROL

This document is updated annually and is available for students to download from the [CAT website](#).

The principal authors of this Student Handbook are Adrian Watson and Tim Coleridge, with editing by the Student Support Manager and Frances Hill.

A **Glossary** in Appendix B explains terms and abbreviations used.

Please inform the Student Support team ([student.support@cat.org.uk](mailto:student.support@cat.org.uk)) if you are aware of any inaccuracies or changes that may be needed to this document.



## INTRODUCTION / WELCOME FROM THE CEO

Thank you for choosing to study with the Graduate School of the Environment (GSE) at the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) and we would like to extend a warm welcome to you at the beginning of your studies with us. We hope you will find your time as a CAT student intellectually rewarding as well as professionally beneficial.

We're delighted and honoured to be leading the work of an internationally renowned environmental charity. We passionately believe that we can create a better world where we live in an environmentally sustainable way – for the benefit of people and planet.

CAT's unique role in demonstrating and teaching practical environmental solutions to a changing planet is more important than ever before. Our Zero Carbon Britain project has shown that society has the technology needed to rise to the challenge of climate change – but there is a big gap between the decarbonisation targets adopted by global leaders and the action needed to achieve this.

As the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation become ever harder to ignore, CAT's ability to promote holistic, practical, and evidence-based solutions to the problem becomes ever more important. CAT and the GSE have a long tradition of teaching sustainability in an enriching and solutions-focused way.

For 50 years people have taken their experience at CAT and used it to become 'change makers' in their workplaces, communities or personal lives. I hope you have a fulfilling time here at CAT and that your studies equip you with the skills, knowledge and insights to play your role in creating a sustainable society.

Have a great time and enjoy the experience.

Best wishes,

**Paul Booth and Eileen Kinsman**

Co-Chief Executive Officers, CAT

### **The Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT)**

The Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) was formed in 1973 and is an internationally renowned environmental charity, a world-leading eco centre, and one of the foremost providers of postgraduate environmental education in the UK.

**Our vision** is a sustainable future for all humanity as part of a thriving natural world.

**Our mission** is to inspire, inform and enable humanity to respond to the climate and biodiversity emergencies.

At the heart of CAT is a belief in the power of inclusive education to offer positive solutions. Some of the key principles that underpin our work are that we use a strong evidence base to provide focused solutions which will both inspire and empower people, giving them the skills and knowledge they need to bring about a positive future.

### **The Relationship between CAT and UEL**

The integrated Masters in Sustainability and Adaptation programmes, comprising of MSc Sustainability and Adaptation (SA); M.Res Sustainability and Adaptation (MRes); MSc Green Building (GB) and MSc Sustainability in Energy Provision and Demand Management (SEPDm) seek to build on the current collaborative partnership between CAT and University of East London (UEL).

The Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT), Machynlleth, Powys is an environmental charity, and these programmes are owned and managed by CAT. The programme content and academic standards are monitored and controlled by UEL. Degrees, Diplomas, and Certificates are awarded by UEL.

These programmes follow the rules and regulations with respect to a UEL-validated programme offered by a third party, and a formal Memorandum of Co-operation (MoC) came into operation from March 2014 and was revised and extended in December 2018. Following the successful 2022 partnership review the MoC will be extended for a further 5 years.

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE**

The M.Res Sustainability and Adaptation (MRes) programme offers an in-depth research route to studying one of the current or emerging environmental issues. It is based and run at the Centre for Alternative Technology and offers a unique combination of academic study with practical research experience that will equip you with skills and research training that are becoming increasingly important for an analytic investigation of sustainability and adaptation. Students may attend the Centre to complete 'on-site / residential' modules, while 'distance-learning' module delivery is offered concurrently. Flexibility is offered for 'blended learning' options.

The programme provides students with the knowledge and skills required to comprehend, plan and research for the challenge of effectively adapting to the current episode of environmental change. The programme gives students the opportunity to develop the confidence, aptitude and critical thinking to allow the student to research and implement sustainability and

adaptation principles effectively into their work; enhancing their future employability as adaptation for environmental change becomes an ever more urgent priority.

As the future environmental situation and the effectiveness of solutions are laced with uncertainty, the programme further aims to enable students learn how to integrate risk assessment into your decision-making processes and discern the influence that the urgency of climatic change has on them. As the programme combines theoretical knowledge with practical and research experience, it offers students the potential to develop into rounded self-reflective learners who can work with others and communicate to others with confidence and clarity.

The research focussed MRes is a Masters degree that emphasises independent study over taught instruction. The programme isn't restricted to a specific subject area but is focussed on your own research activity. The MRes project will be developed in collaboration with our experienced academic staff members, who will support you with the specialist knowledge and supervisory input. The MRes is particularly aimed at students who would like to have more comprehensive training in original research and/or have the desire to progress to do doctoral studies or undertake research in the workplace.

Although the programme emphasises your independent study, you will receive taught training on the fundamentals of sustainability and adaptation and research study skills. You will also have the option to study a taught module that will underpin your research topic. The taught topics covered within the programme include: environmental politics, social and economic systems, land use, ecosystem services, waste, water security, food security, acute resilience pathways for cities and communities, influences on communication, sustainable design of buildings, energy provision, energy flows in buildings, environmental responsive materials and resources, logistics, transportation, environmental assessment, sustainable renovation, transformational change, risk and vulnerability assessment, resilience building, adaptive capacity, sustainability thinking and adaptation transformation planning.

The key features of the MRes Sustainability and Adaptation programme are:

1. A credit-based modular programme leading towards a higher degree;
2. An integrated and flexible programme offering transfer arrangements to related specialist MSc programmes run by CAT;
3. A programme run by CAT, which has a long pedigree of active environmentalism, development, appraisal and practical experience of efficient, low-impact and novel buildings and renewable energy systems;
4. A range of exceptional external speakers who contribute to CAT's delivery of the programmes. These including leading thinkers in sustainability, renewable energy, and building technologies.
5. A programme offering the flexibility of 'on-site block residential' and 'distance-learning' delivered concurrently, 'blended' learning options, and the opportunity to remain in employment whilst studying;

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6. A programme available by full-time or part-time study with flexibility of transfer offered between modes of study;
7. Block delivery 'on-site / residential' modules undertaken in the immersive study environment at CAT, allowing students to escape their day-to-day surroundings and consider issues, challenges and solutions afresh and in the company of peers having similar aspirations;
8. Learning experiences which are enriched and broadened by a diverse range of student backgrounds, facilitating a productive and highly topical discourse amongst your student group, with social and informal learning supportive of the formal learning activities.
9. The extended dissertation develops vocationally valuable skills and research training **with more independent study to allow you to create your own learning experience and allows you to specialise in a chosen field of sustainability and adaptation.**

#### **Course Duration and Modes of Study**

The duration of this programme is as follows:

- Full Time Study: 18 months comprising of 9 months taught modules and the 9 month dissertation module
- Part Time Study: 36 months comprising of 12 months taught modules and the 9 month part time dissertation module

The time limit for completion of the programme is six years after first enrolment.

#### **Methods of Study**

The following methods of study are available on this programme:

- Block on-site residential study at CAT
- Distance-Learning
- Blended

Delivery is in the form of 15-credit taught modules, with a 60-credit dissertation research module, each overseen by a dedicated Module Leader. A typical 15-credit taught modules will last at least eight weeks, comprising 'block on-site residential' and 'distance-learning' teaching delivered concurrently within this period, in accordance with the University's policies and procedures relating to learning provision.

**On-site residential study at CAT** will typically consist of one 5-day block per month, Monday - Friday (September – June), scheduled Week 1 of the module period. Students are supported via distance-learning methods whilst away from CAT for the remainder of the module period.

**Distance-Learning study** will consist of contact teaching, self-directed learning activities and private study over the module period – typically eight weeks, with contact teaching

sessions predominantly timetabled within weeks 1 - 4. Distance-learning modules can only be undertaken when delivered.

### **Course Aims, Objectives and Learning Outcomes**

This programme is designed to give you the opportunity to:

- Critically reflect upon the causes, seriousness, and urgency of the current episode of environmental and climatic change with respect to how these factors influence sustainability thinking and adaptation.
- Hone your ability to identify and appraise the complex influences that political, ethical, legal, social, cultural and non-cultural, factors and opinions, related to environmental and climatic change, have on the sustainability and adaptation related, practice and research.
- Develop evaluation skills of complex issues to become systematic, iterative, imaginative and creative, in order that you can make sound judgements within the limits of uncertainty and incomplete data and become a self-reflective practitioner or researcher who can communicate opinions and conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- Undertake an extended independent piece of original research and writing on a topic of their choosing within the field of sustainability and adaptation.
- Develop self-confidence and an ability to act on own initiative, to prepare the student for the rigours and demands of employment or further postgraduate study in areas related to sustainability and adaptation.
- Make informed decisions based upon an appraisal of the academic content combined with practical experience and directed research, in order that the student may develop the ability to synergise theory and practice knowledge domains into a deep and holistic understanding.
- Analyse with increased awareness your personal competences in order that you can realise your potential for self-development and become an independent lifelong self-reflective learner and practitioner in your area of chosen interest.

At the end of this programme, you will be able to:

#### **Knowledge**

- Demonstrate a holistic, systematic and sophisticated understanding of the concepts, issues, and theories that are central to sustainability thinking and adaptation (e.g. urgency of environmental change, vulnerability, adaptive capacity, and resilience building);
- Demonstrate a critical understanding of the potential nature and scope of the complex interactions between, and the interconnectedness of, the variety of factors that influence sustainability and adaptation;
- Present a sophisticated appreciation of the influence that political, social, cultural and non-cultural perspectives can have on sustainability and adaptation processes within the wider perspective;

- Demonstrate through reasoned argument the ability to integrate and rationalize the influences of the multiple environmental concerns facing humanity have on sustainability and adaptation decision-making processes;
- Clearly understand the theories and processes of team work and how these facilitate self-reflective practice.

### **Thinking skills**

- Develop and sustain arguments in a variety of written forms, formulating appropriate questions and utilising primary and secondary evidence;
- Critically evaluate the methodologies, analysis, conclusions and relevance, and where appropriate, propose new hypotheses from congruent argument, of current research and advanced scholarship;
- Synthesise a clear understanding of the various legal, institutional and ethical considerations and developments associated with sustainability and adaptation in an area of practice
- Display a holistic and sophisticated understanding of how knowledge is advanced through research, and produce clear, logically argued and original written works.
- Demonstrate initiative and originality in problem solving to research, acting independently to plan and implement novel lines of scientific inquiry to a professional or equivalent level, making decisions in complex situation

### **Subject-Based Practical skills**

- Position with clarity, relevance and insight a variety of sustainability and adaptation responses within a wider conceptual and methodological framework drawn from secondary literature and scholarship;
- Design and execute a project presenting its results and discussing its implications at the level of professional research standard
- Data collection from primary and secondary data sources which may include fieldwork where appropriate
- Report original research including planning, design, execution of report writing using personal initiative in a dissertation format and also potentially towards peer-reviewed academic publications where appropriate
- Analyse, evaluate, draw conclusions from and critically reflect upon secondary literature and evidence, including academic and scholarly writings, advertising materials, arts and visual representations, various legal documentation, regulations and guidelines associated with adaptation and sustainability in general application;
- Utilise the principles of sustainability and adaptation in practice

### **Skills for life and work (general skills)**

- Effectively communicate (in written and oral forms) to a team and to a wider audience including, potentially, peer-reviewed academic publication;

- Design, investigate, manage and present an extended and independently-conceived piece of research;
- Gather and use evidence and data to find, retrieve, organise and exchange new information;
- Demonstrate clarity, fluency, and coherence in a variety of written forms and expression;
- Use IT and computer skills to gather and organise evidence and data to find, retrieve, sort and exchange new information at a standard which could be acceptable for publication in a refereed journal;
- Organise tasks and manage time autonomously and effectively to a professional academic level.
- Work in a team, identifying individual and collective goals and responsibilities and performing in a manner appropriate to these roles, recognizing and respecting the views and opinions of other team members, and evaluating their own and others performance in a constructive manner.

### Programme Structure and Intermediate Awards

The structure for each award from the MRes Sustainability and Adaptation programme is presented below. Candidates may be awarded a Master of Research in Sustainability and Adaptation (MRes) upon successful completion of 180 credits at Level 7, consisting of: the core introductory modules (EV7132 and EV7137, 15 credits each), the core Applied Research Design module (EV7125 15 credit), one optional module (15 credits) from those offered on the programme – see Table 2.5 below; and the core MRes Dissertation (120 credits).

Module start	Module Code	Module Title	DL (Y/N)	Credits	Status
Sept 23	EV7132	Introduction to Sustainability and Adaptation	Y	15	CORE
Nov 23	EV7137	Sustainability and Adaptation Concepts in Practice	Y	15	CORE
May 24	EV7125	Applied Research Design	Y	15	CORE
Sept 24	EV7135	MRes Dissertation	Y	120	CORE
<b>One Optional Modules (comprising 15 credits) chosen from those listed below:</b>					
Oct 23	EV7128	Energy Flows in Buildings	Y	15	OPTIONAL

Nov 23	EV7105	Cities and Communities	Y	15	OPTIONAL
Dec 23	EV7129	Food Production and Consumption	Y	15	OPTIONAL
Feb 24	EV7131	Introduction to Politics and Economics of the Environment	Y	15	OPTIONAL
March 24	EV7108	Energy Provision	Y	15	OPTIONAL
March 24	EV7127	Ecosystems and Ecosystem Services	Y	15	OPTIONAL
Apr 24	EV7126	Communicating Transformational Social Change	Y	15	OPTIONAL
Apr 24	EV136	Restoration Ecology	Y	15	OPTIONAL
May 24	EV7110	Sustainable Materials in the Built Environment	Y	15	OPTIONAL
June 24	EV7130	International Zero CO2 Energy	Y	15	OPTIONAL

The 120-credit core EV7135 MRes Dissertation module, undertaken after completion of 60-credits of taught modules, completes the Masters of Research programme. Students may present a conventional written dissertation for this module, or an alternative, design focused portfolio approach that allows presentation in a non-standard format and assessment of research artefacts.

Students achieving both 15-credit core introductory modules EV7132 and EV7137 will be eligible for a 'Short Course SA' award as an exit qualification.

### Study Break

You may intermit from the programme with the agreement of the Programme Leader and/or UEL (as applicable). Before intermitting you must have completed at least one module from the programme, otherwise you will be withdrawn from the programme, and you cannot intermit from a term in which you have already attended a module.

In the first instance a student can request a break for up to one academic year only and the maximum intermission period allowed from first enrolling on a programme is two academic years. In exceptional circumstances more than one intermission may be granted.

During the intermitted period, no module study may be undertaken. However, where intermission is requested after assessment has taken place, all outstanding reassessment requirements from a module should be undertaken, or else the module will automatically be regarded as not passed on reassessment (standard regulations on extenuation apply).

For more information please read the Progression Rules which can be found in the Student Policies and Procedures section of the [Current Student webpage \(click here\)](#).

### Transfer options to related programmes

The MSc Sustainability and Adaptation (SA) course is integrated with two separate, but related specialist MSc programmes validated by UEL and delivered by CAT; the MSc Sustainability in Energy Provision and Demand Management (SEPDM) course and the MSc Green Building (GB) course. The MSc SA also shares some modules with CAT's MSc courses validated by LJMU; the MSc in Sustainable Food and Natural Resources (SFNR) programme, the MSc Sustainability and Ecology (SE) and the MSc Sustainability and Behaviour Change (SBC). Transfer between these programmes may be permissible subject to entry and admissions requirements. Transfer of eligible credit can be considered via the Accreditation of Prior Credited Learning (ACL) policy. Additional fees for transfer between courses and/or between universities (UEL to/from LJMU validated courses) will also be applicable at the time. For further guidance on courses transfer, please contact the Programme Leader.

## KEY STAFF, CONTACT DETAILS AND STAFF ROLES

The Key Staff and Contact Details are correct at point of publication. You will be notified of any changes.

### School Management Committee

**CAT co-CEO:** Paul Booth and Eileen Kinsman

**CAT Director of Finance:** Paul Booth

**Head of School:** Dr Adrian Watson ([adrian.watson@cat.org.uk](mailto:adrian.watson@cat.org.uk))

**UEL Link Tutor:** Teresa Serrano ([t.serrano@uel.ac.uk](mailto:t.serrano@uel.ac.uk))

### Programme Leaders:

<b>Sustainability and Adaptation</b>	Tim Coleridge	<a href="mailto:tim.coleridge@cat.org.uk">tim.coleridge@cat.org.uk</a>
<b>Green Building</b>	Tim Coleridge	<a href="mailto:tim.coleridge@cat.org.uk">tim.coleridge@cat.org.uk</a>
<b>Sustainable Energy Provision and Demand Management</b>	Dr Frances Hill	<a href="mailto:frances.hill@cat.org.uk">frances.hill@cat.org.uk</a>
<b>Sustainable Architecture</b>	Dr Carl Meddings	<a href="mailto:carl.meddings@cat.org.uk">carl.meddings@cat.org.uk</a>
<b>Sustainable Food and Natural Resources</b>	Dr Rebecca Kent	<a href="mailto:rebecca.kent@cat.org.uk">rebecca.kent@cat.org.uk</a>
<b>Sustainability and Ecology</b>	Dr Jane Fisher	<a href="mailto:jane.fisher@cat.org.uk">jane.fisher@cat.org.uk</a>
<b>Sustainability and Behaviour Change</b>	Dr Jane Fisher	<a href="mailto:jane.fisher@cat.org.uk">jane.fisher@cat.org.uk</a>

### Non-Academic Support

<b>Student Support Manager</b>	Jemma Barratt	<a href="mailto:jemma.barratt@cat.org.uk">jemma.barratt@cat.org.uk</a>
<b>Student Support Officers</b>	Diana Gall Helen Hayes Katherine Barclay	<a href="mailto:student.support@cat.org.uk">student.support@cat.org.uk</a>
<b>Student Finance Officers</b>	Alice Leonard Ben Watson	<a href="mailto:student.finance@cat.org.uk">student.finance@cat.org.uk</a>
<b>Graduate School Marketing</b>	Alis Rees	<a href="mailto:GSMO@cat.org.uk">GSMO@cat.org.uk</a>
<b>Applications and Enquiries</b>		<a href="mailto:study@cat.org.uk">study@cat.org.uk</a>
<b>Graduation and GSE Events</b>		<a href="mailto:event.gse@cat.org.uk">event.gse@cat.org.uk</a>

### Academic Staff

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Dr Jane Fisher	<a href="mailto:jane.fisher@cat.org.uk">jane.fisher@cat.org.uk</a>
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### **Circumstances in which you may contact UEL directly**

You will find that for most issues that arise during your studies academic and administrative staff at your location of study will be able to help. If however, you have concerns that lie outside the remit of these staff you can contact the UEL service desk (see further details below) in the first instance who will be able to re-direct your enquiry as appropriate.

## **COURSE OPERATION AND STUDENT REGISTRATION**

### **CAT Registration and Induction**

All students will complete an enrolment form with CAT prior to their studies and pay a non-refundable £50 deposit. In early August, this information will be sent to UEL for processing.

You will be issued with a @student.cat.org.uk email account on 1<sup>st</sup> August, which will give you access to Microsoft 365. Throughout August, Student Support will hold Induction sessions online to familiarise you with CAT GSE systems.

All modules have their own Team within Microsoft Team which is where you will find all your resources and meeting links for online sessions. The Student Finance Officers at CAT will add students who have paid their module invoice to each module approximately 1 week before it begins. If you are having difficulty paying your module invoice please email [student.finance@cat.org.uk](mailto:student.finance@cat.org.uk) as soon as possible to setup a payment plan so that you do not fall behind with your studies.

### **UEL Registration**

You will be provided with UEL online accounts on joining the course which will give some access to UEL applications.

It is essential that you log in to UEL direct and enrol with UEL using the UEL student number that you have been given prior to attending any lectures.

#### **How to log in to UEL Direct:**

1. Log on to <https://www.uel.ac.uk/students>
2. Click on 'ENTER UEL DIRECT' Log in;
3. Enter your user name... the letter u in front of your student number (e.g. u1234567);
4. Enter your network password (your initial password is your date of birth in the format dd-mm-yy i.e. enter 29-feb-80 if your date of birth is 29 February 1980; the hyphens are important);
5. Go to your "To do list"
6. In your In tray, under "Action," click on "Please sign-up with UEL" (returning students click on "Please confirm details")
7. Follow the on-screen instructions

- Remember to log out after completing the Sign-up/Confirm details task. (On-screen instructions exist.)

**To view your results on UEL Direct:**

Log on to <https://www.uel.ac.uk/students>

- Click on 'ENTER UEL DIRECT' Log in;
- Log-in as described above;
- Go to 'My record' and 'Module results'

If you have problems accessing UEL Direct, including password reset, please contact the UEL IT Services helpdesk via:

Telephone 0208 223 2468

Email [servicedesk@uel.ac.uk](mailto:servicedesk@uel.ac.uk)

Website <https://www.uel.ac.uk/discover/professional-services/it-services>

Once you have gained admission to the course you must login to the UEL direct page using your student username which will be your UEL ID number and password and complete the on-line enrolment. CAT will assist and ensure that you complete your online enrolment task promptly. UEL Direct is available at <https://www.uel.ac.uk/students> (click on 'new students')

For general enquiries concerning enrolment, you must contact your local Student Support/Administrative Office for guidance in the first instance and then if you are advised to contact UEL, please send an e-mail to the UEL Academic Partnerships Office at [apo@uel.ac.uk](mailto:apo@uel.ac.uk).

## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

CAT GSE operates an Equality and Diversity Policy in line with UEL. Please see the [Current Student Webpage \(click here\)](#) to find the GSE Equality and Diversity Policy. UEL's Equality and Diversity Strategy can be found using the link provided below.



- [Link to the UEL Equality and Diversity Strategy](#)
- [Student Protection Plan](#)

## COURSE MANAGEMENT

The Graduate School of the Environment (GSE) is part of the CAT Charity Ltd; however, the mode of operation of the School including employment and remuneration practices follow that of UEL and will follow those recommended by the University and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA).

The Programme Leader compiles the collaborative annual monitoring (CAM) report, which reviews all aspects of the programme, for quality assurance purposes. Refer to UEL's Quality Manual, Part 7: <https://www.uel.ac.uk/Discover/Governance/Quality-Assurance>

### **Course Committees and Student Representatives**

Course Committees provide a formal structure for student participation and feedback on their course of study. Course committees provide a forum in which students can express their views about the management of the course, and the content, delivery and assessment of modules, in order to identify appropriate actions to be taken.

CAT operates a rolling calendar of committee meetings consisting of Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC), Programme Committee (PC) and Academic Council (AC). Student Staff Liaison Committee is open to all students, and Programme Committee/Academic Council are attended by Student Representatives who are elected in October each academic year,

Information on the Course Committees (including minutes of Academic Council) can be found on the [Quality Assurance webpage \(click here\)](#).

### **Student Feedback**

The school takes Student Feedback very seriously, and there are a number of mechanisms in place to facilitate recording of feedback from our students and communication of how feedback has been used to enhance programme delivery. Feedback can be submitted using the [GSE Forms Hub \(click here\)](#).

## **ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT**

Engagement with teaching and learning activities is essential for success on modules. If you are absent without an independently verifiable cause from classes or other required activities including online activities on Teams on three consecutive occasions and/or your attendance falls below 75% at any time, CAT reserves the right to de-register you from the module to which the classes or other required activities apply. When you are onsite CAT will monitor your attendance, and if studying online CAT will use the monitoring tools built into Microsoft Teams to assess your engagement. You will have a right of appeal to a panel comprising two members of School staff and one student. If you are de-registered from two modules in one term, you may be withdrawn from the programme.

Please see the CAT Student Charter and the Student Progression Rules documents, under Student Policies and Procedures, on the [Current Student webpage \(click here\)](#).

## KEY DATES

The 2024/25 Academic Calendar can be found on the current student webpage ([click here](#)).

## MODULE SPECIFICATIONS

Module specifications define each module of study on the course. They will include **learning outcomes** and the **aims** for each module. These documents form part of the 'definitive' documentation for the course. It is important to note that reading lists and indicative content are likely to change.

Module Specifications can be found on the current student webpage ([click here](#)).

## AWARD CERTIFICATES & GRADUATION

Upon completion of your Dissertation or final module, you will be presented for an award at the next Assessment Board at UEL (typically held in October, January and June). Once the outcomes of the board are processed, you will be asked to log into UEL direct within a set timeframe to check your confirmed marks. Following this, your certificate will be issued and delivered to CAT. Student Support will contact you to confirm the address you wish this to be forwarded onto. Certificates **will not be issued** if a student has any outstanding fees on their account with CAT.

You will be invited to attend Graduation at CAT the summer following your award. Please email [event.gse@cat.org.uk](mailto:event.gse@cat.org.uk) if you do not receive an invite by the Easter prior to your expected Graduation.

You will also be invited to a UEL Graduation Ceremony. Please see UEL's website for more information about the graduation ceremony: <https://www.uel.ac.uk/about/graduation> .

## NON-ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Non-academic matters of student discipline will be governed by the policies regulations, and procedures of the academic partner institution (i.e. CAT). The exception to this is where non-academic disciplinary issues arise on University of East London premises. Under these circumstances, UEL disciplinary and misconduct policies will apply. [You can see these policies by clicking on this link.](#)

The CAT GSE non-academic misconduct information can be found within the Student Disciplinary Regulations and Procedures Policy on the current student webpage ([click here](#)).

## FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Throughout your course, there will be opportunities to debate on different topics, some of which some may be controversial and challenging. Being able to debate these topics is an important part of your development both at your time here and in your future. To support this,

we have developed further information and guidance in our UEL Freedom of Speech Statement, alongside a Code of Practice and Frequently Asked Questions.

UEL have adopted the Universities UK definitions of freedom of speech and academic freedom, and for guidance these are set out below:

**Freedom of speech** means everyone has the right to express lawful views and opinions freely, in speech or in writing, without interference.

**Academic freedom** means protecting the intellectual independence of academics to question and test received views and wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing themselves in danger of losing their jobs or privileges or reducing the likelihood of them securing promotion or different roles at the university.



- [Link to the University's Student Policies](#)
- [Report + Support for reporting incidents](#)
- [Freedom of Speech | University of East London \(uel.ac.uk\)](#)



**Table 5.5: Summary of Teaching Methods**

Teaching method	Description	Class size
Lectures	Live lecture presentations, written lecture resources and audio or video methods (subject to resources and IT/Teams/SharePoint)	12-150
Seminar	On-site and through DL methods (MS Teams)	3-30
Tutorial	On-site and through DL methods (Teams, telephone)	Mostly individual
Practicals	Demonstrations and practical workshops on-site, including computer practicals and self-directed exercises through DL methods.	Onsite: 6-15
Presentations	Live individual or group presentations on-site, and individual or group presentations submitted by DL methods (Moodle), which comprise summative or formative coursework assignments	Typically, 5-10 for individual, 20-100 for groups.
Other methods	Quizzes, blog articles and similar exercises	Various

**Lectures:** Lectures comprise the largest element of formal teaching activities for both on-site and distance-learning modules, with 7 to 11 lectures of 1-2 hrs delivered by a mixture of in-house and visiting lecturers in each typical 15-credit module, with 7 to 11 associated sets of slides, notes, or audio or video recordings made available on MS Teams. Visiting lecturers play an important part of the teaching on the programme, bringing in valuable expertise from other academic institutions, government departments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and/or professional practice.

**Structured seminars:** Topic focused structured seminars are developed and run by staff (both in-house and visitors) with specialist knowledge of the subject areas. These provide opportunities for students to engage with lecturers in more informal contexts, helping clarify concepts, apply knowledge gained from the module lectures to workshop activities, discuss and explore more widely around and deeply into subjects that are of particular interest to them.

**Study Skills seminars:** Study Skills seminars are routinely offered focusing on building core academic skills and preparing students well for the coursework assignments from each module.

**Practicals:** Practical workshops aim to apply theoretical knowledge gained earlier in the module or programme to hands-on, experiential, practical activities, which can be invaluable to help address the needs of different learning styles and different levels of prior knowledge. On-site practical workshops are tailored to each module and may require specialist clothing, footwear or equipment (PPE) for participation - workshop tutors will explain any associated risk assessments and safe-systems-of-work. Self-directed practical exercises will typically be incorporated into distance-learning activities, involving interaction on MS Teams and peer formative assessment. Instructions and guidance will be provided through MS Teams, with additional support from the Module Leader and tutors.

**Personal Tutors and Student Learning Support:** A clear structure of Student Learning Support is in place for all students, which explains the pastoral and academic support provided on the programme. This includes defining the role of the academic Personal Tutor, and when students might need to contact a Module Leader, members of the module delivery team, or the Student Support Officers for various aspects of support. The framework provides a high level of directed support to enable all our students to progress to becoming independent learners and researchers at Masters level. Please see Appendix A for further information on this.

**Assessment:** Assessment is a fundamental part of the student learning experience and is the general description for a set of processes which measures the success of a student's learning. Assessment on this course is undertaken in line with UEL's Manual of General Regulations <https://uel.ac.uk/about/governance/manual-general-regulations>, with 'Part 5: Assessment' setting out the general principles and 'Part 3 – Academic Regulations' defining pass marks and thresholds, amongst other specific criteria.

Information about each module's assessment will be provided in the Module Specification, Module Guide and during the first week of teaching. Assessment submissions should be uploaded to Moodle **before midday on the published deadline**. If you are having issues submitting your work, please email it to [student.support@cat.org.uk](mailto:student.support@cat.org.uk) **before the deadline**.

All coursework submissions are assessed in line with UEL's [Assessment & Feedback Policy](#). For standard 15-credit modules, provisional marks and feedback will be released 15 working days after the initial submission. Internal moderation will be undertaken both by CAT and UEL, following which the moderated work will be reviewed by the External Examiners, and marks will be presented at UEL's assessment board. Once this process is complete, you will receive an email asking you to check your confirmed marks in UEL Direct within a set timeframe.

If reassessment if required, you will be informed when the provisional marks are released. You will then need to work towards the resubmission deadline which will be published in the Module Guide. Resubmissions are due in November, March or July depending on when the module is presented to the assessment board.

Coursework for summative assessment must be submitted electronically to the submission schedule. Failure to comply with this requirement and complete associated documentation will mean the work is not accepted and a mark of zero will be recorded. All assessments submitted electronically need to be uploaded before 12 noon on the day of the deadline. Details of coursework requirements, marking criteria and submission deadlines are provided in the Module Guides on Teams. All coursework should be submitted in PDF format or as a Word document (or a Microsoft-readable document) through Moodle, unless otherwise stated. The coursework from each module is developed to provide students adequate opportunities to demonstrate achievement of the module's learning outcomes. Detailed mark sheets and marking criteria (rubrics) for each of these forms of assessment are provided within Module Guides and/or in the module's Team. Grade descriptions are used as indicators of performance.

In addition, academic staff also refer to the Generic Masters Marking Criteria (Table 7) to provide guidance as to the appropriate academic standard (see below).

**Table 7.** Generic Master's marking criteria.

<b>80-100. Distinction</b>	An accomplished piece of work with no grammatical or other errors. Shows exceptional insight and originality in the use of evidence, which might be from the literature or experiment. Where appropriate, it makes connections between experimental evidence and the literature. Contains material of publishable quality in a peer-reviewed journal. Worthy of retaining for reference.
<b>70-79. Distinction</b>	An original or insightful answer that draws on the student's own observations combined with a critical treatment of the literature. The work demonstrates clear understanding of the subject and current theoretical debates. Contains material that may be potentially of publishable quality in a scientific journal paper, and worthy of retaining for reference.
<b>60-69. Merit</b>	A well organised, clearly expressed and direct response to the topic, showing broad evidence of reading and good analytical skills. A competent answer that shows a thorough understanding of arguments and evidence and sets them in context. It makes efficient use of relevant reading and examples, where appropriate. The work does not display the outstanding ability, critical acuity or originality that characterises distinction-level answers.
<b>50-59. Pass</b>	A coherent, adequately structured and expressed response to the topic, showing evidence of adequate critique and sound argument, but little originality or critical insight. A competent yet pedestrian treatment of ideas and concepts from lectures or set reading, but little evidence of deeper understanding and independent critical appraisal. The work is

	descriptive, lacking the depth of critical analysis that characterizes merit-level answers.
<b>40-49. Fail</b>	Fails to meet the criteria and requirements of the assignment. The work shows some understanding of the topic and of the broader subject area but includes little evidence of real understanding or detailed knowledge. Contains mistakes, misunderstandings or irrelevant material. Poor organisation and an uncritical approach that is not well expressed.
<b>0-39. Fail</b>	Substantially fails to meet the criteria and requirements of the assignment. At best, not a direct response to the question or topic, but shows some understanding of the general field, or conveys some understanding and argument. At worst, nothing of relevance in answer to the question or topic. Likely to be muddled or incomplete, and inadequately expressed.

### Word Count Policy

**For a standard 15-credit module, the assessment requirements are based upon the workload required to submit 3,000 words of essay or report. Alternative assessments such as presentations have a word count equivalence, but this means that all 15-credit modules have equivalence in assessment.**

#### What does the word count mean?

Written assessments have a maximum allowed length, e.g. 3,000 words for the Report in Sustainability and Adaptation: Concepts in Practice (EV7137). Word lengths are stated in the module specification and defined by detailed coursework criteria within the Module Guide for each module.

#### Why is there a word count?

It is an important skill in academic and professional contexts to write to a defined word limit. The reason for this is to support you in learning to gather your thoughts and express them concisely. Many workplaces, and similar settings, require this competence.

#### What is included?

The wordcount includes all your core narrative and reasoning, including introduction and conclusion. It also includes:

- Subtitles (but not the main title);
- In-text citations;
- Calculations;
- Direct quotations from another's work (which must be indicated using quotation marks and appropriate citation).

The wordcount DOES NOT include:

- Cover sheet;
- Title;
- Table of Contents;
- Abstract (unless otherwise noted);
- Captions and other text on or in figures, tables or boxes;
- Headers and Footnotes (which are discouraged anyway);
- References (In the Reference list at the end of the assessment);

- Appendices (which may be used to contain supporting information but are not taken into consideration for marks).

#### What are the penalties?

Initially the penalty for exceeding the word limit is threefold:

1. Any work beyond the word-count will not be marked, so you will lose the opportunity to gain crucial marks for this part;
2. You are quite likely to lose further marks for structure, as your structure may become less focussed and less appropriate to the task (which was to produce an essay etc. of that length);
3. You miss out on the learning outcomes – which often include an element of learning to communicate effectively.

#### How can I manage this?

If Microsoft Word or an equivalent programme is used, it can help significantly. Styles can be defined and applied for abstract, captions, references etc, and separate styles applied to the 'body text,' which counts towards the total.

Inserting figures, tables, or boxed text as 'images' (e.g. pdfs, jpeg) can also help manage your wordcount as the text within them will be excluded by word-count tools (but please note, the contents will NOT be marked as part of the narrative).

### **Dissertation**

The Dissertation is the culmination of your MRes and should be a major piece of academic writing developed from independent research. The MRes Dissertation portfolio is worth 120 credits, two thirds of your final degree mark, constituting an opportunity to explore a topic in much greater breadth and depth than is possible earlier in the course – it cannot therefore be assumed that performance achieved during the taught modules will have a direct relationship to the potential level of achievement in the Dissertation module.

The MRes Dissertation provides you with the opportunity to show that you have gained the necessary skills and knowledge to organise and conduct a research project and to set this within the wider context of the subjects under study in the MRes. It should demonstrate that you are skilled in identifying an area suitable for research; assessing the relevant secondary data and literature; setting out a research methodology and devising appropriate methods; analysing the primary data and/or secondary data; assessing the data in relation to the literature in that field; drawing conclusions; disseminating and if appropriate making relevant recommendations and / or suggestions for further research.

Assessment of the module is in 3 parts:

- 1) Research Presentation (Poster or Oral). This provides an opportunity to disseminate the methodology and results to an audience of your student peers. Whilst the presentation is worth 10% of module assessment, the timing of the presentation will allow for instant formative feedback which will support analysis and submission of the dissertation.
- 2) A written dissertation (recommended 20-25,000 words with a 30,000-words max.) or equivalent design focused portfolio. This is the substantive assessment element and worth 80% of the module assessment. The dissertation should be based on an original

piece of research. It allows the student to write in an informed manner which will: demonstrate the context and rationale for research; deliver a robust and repeatable methodology; clearly articulate an appropriate quantity and quality of results drawn from the methods which is appropriate to the aims of the research; and allow for a confident and detailed analysis, so that clear conclusions can be drawn which can add to the body of research in the chosen topic.

- 3) Oral examination (*viva voce*) of the dissertation/portfolio. This will be a discussion with a project assessor who will normally not be your project supervisor. A *viva voce* is quite normal for an extended research based qualification and is there to enable the examiners to assure themselves that the thesis and the research are the students own work. It also allows the student to demonstrate their understanding of their research field; allowing them to clearly demonstrate how it fits within the wider field of sustainability and offering them an opportunity to clarify and defend the results and findings of the research. The *viva voce* will normally take up to an hour and be worth 10% of the final module assessment. The meeting will be recorded to allow external review and moderation of the event.

#### **Alternative format 'Design Dissertation Portfolio' (30,000 words or equivalent max.)**

The MRes SA EV7135 Dissertation module allows for an alternative format for submission and assessment, as a Design Dissertation 'portfolio', which is seen as a means of supplementing the traditional dissertation format so as to enable a wider range of relevant skills and characteristics to be presented, aiding inclusivity within the module's assessment. There are also potential benefits in terms of how the process of building a portfolio can further improve learners' abilities, especially for employment and life-long learning.

The Design dissertation by portfolio differs from a more general portfolio in that it needs to be integrated to describe a body of work answering a research question. A portfolio at Masters-level must therefore be more than just a collection of pieces of work. There needs to be an integrated theme that links the artefacts in the portfolio (and at least one artefact should be used to evidence this). You must demonstrate that you are able to produce evidence of your work, but also be able to appraise and select appropriate examples that justify your claim to be a Masters level student.

The nature of the artefact/s required for the Design Dissertation will depend on the study and will be negotiated with the student. Typical examples of artefacts could include: design drawings, videos, photographs, images or 3-D renders, diagrams, infographics or illustrations; scale model/s or full-scale mock-ups; prototype building system, element or product/s; monitoring, data logging, putting data through predictive software and/or measurements from field studies.

CAT will support students with the facilities and equipment available onsite at the CAT site and/or as available from their collaborative partners, subject to agreement. However, there may be additional costs to the student for the artefact/s which will be in the region of up to £1,000. CAT will work with students to minimise their costs and to develop low/no cost options wherever possible.

<b>Table 5.6(1): Dissertation Module Delivery Timetable</b>		
<b>Dissertation Module Key Events</b>	<b>Full Time Route 1)</b>	<b>Part Time Route 2)</b>
	Supervision starting in September	Supervision starting in September
Research Methods Workshops	May	May
Submission deadline for Research Design Proposal (RDP) and Research Ethics Proposal Form and Risk Assessment	July	July
Feedback on Research Design Proposal (RDP), Research Ethics Proposal Form and Risk Assessment, and assignment of supervisor	July/August	July/August
Dissertation supervision begins – <b>note:</b> primary research cannot commence until Research Ethics clearance has been confirmed.	1 <sup>st</sup> September	1 <sup>st</sup> September
Students submit Dissertation	31 <sup>st</sup> May	31 <sup>st</sup> May – the following year
Dissertation mark and feedback released (after assessment board)	October	October



- Link to the Student Handbook page on Assessment and Feedback  
[Link to Student Policies](#)



## REFERENCING

As a student you will be taught how to write correctly referenced essays. UEL's standard **Harvard referencing** system is from *Cite Them Right*. Cite them Right is the standard Harvard referencing style at UEL for all Schools, however professional body requirements will take precedence for instance the School of Psychology which uses the APA system. <https://www.citethemrightonline.com/>

Please refer to the CAT GSE document below for advice on Referencing. You will need to login with your CAT student email account to access this document.

[Citing and Referencing for GSE Programmes July 2023.pdf](#)



## ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT & PLAGIARISM

For the purposes of University regulations, Academic Misconduct is defined as a practice that leads to an unfair advantage in an assessment for the purposes of achieving a personal gain. Examples of such misconduct are given in the section below: the list is not exhaustive and the use of any form of unfair or dishonest practice in assessment can be considered potential misconduct.

Academic Partner institutions will follow the principles of all UEL Teaching, Learning and Student Policies but there may be small differences in the local application of processes. The CAT GSE Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures can be found on the [Current Student webpage \(click here\)](#).



The University adheres to its responsibility to support and promote the highest standards of **rigour and integrity** and embed a culture of honesty, transparency and care and respect for all participants and subjects of research. The University is committed to ensuring that research is conducted with integrity and good research practices are upheld. Please refer to the CAT Graduate School Ethics Committee: Terms of Reference and Membership document on the [Current Student webpage \(click here\)](#) for further information.



### **CAT Support Services**

In September, you will be allocated a Personal Tutor who will be your first point of contact for academic/pastoral support during your course.

A dedicated team of Student Support Officers are also available Monday-Friday 9am-5pm for any administrative queries you may have. It may take up to 3 working days for a response to email during busy periods, or you can book a Teams call with a specific member of the team by [clicking here](#).

For further information on support for students please refer to Appendix A.

### **Students with Additional Learning Needs**

CAT aims to be proactive in supporting all students during their studies with us. At enrolment, we request that any student with additional learning needs books an appointment with Student Support to ensure that support is in place prior to the first module starting. Students can declare Additional Learning Needs at any point of their study with CAT. We also have an Additional Learning Needs Coordinator who can provide academic support/signposting, currently this is Anna Poston ([anna.poston@cat.org.uk](mailto:anna.poston@cat.org.uk)).

Please familiarise yourself with the Additional Learning Needs Policy on the [Current Student webpage \(click here\)](#), to ensure that you have access to all the required support during your studies.

We also recommend all students who are eligible apply for The Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) which is available to postgraduate students. The DSA is a non-means-tested grant that students with disabilities can apply for, and for most students with disabilities and/or dyslexia this will be their main source of support, whether that be technological or human.

The DSA is funded by central government and administered by local education authorities and is designed to provide a 'level playing field' and as such should not be used to provide you with equipment that will give you an unfair advantage over other students on the programme. [For further information please click here.](#)

### **Safeguarding**

GSE is predominantly an adult environment but is nevertheless committed to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults as set out in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act (2012). Protecting vulnerable groups of students' is part of our wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting students from other harms (e.g. alcohol or substance misuse, gangs, neglect, abuse and sexual exploitation, domestic violence, forced marriages and female genital mutilation).

### **PREVENT**

GSE staff have all undertaken PREVENT training, and students can also receive training through the following website (<https://www.foundationonline.org.uk/>). Any students with concerns about people being drawn into terrorism should approach Adrian Watson (PREVENT coordinator and Head of School) or any lecturer.

### **Chaplaincy**

The GSE Chaplain provides confidential support to students of any faith or none. This is currently Frances Hill ([frances.hill@cat.org.uk](mailto:frances.hill@cat.org.uk)).

### **Local Accommodation**

During onsite taught modules, we have accommodation available onsite at a discounted student rate. Outside of these weeks, students can book B&B onsite via the CAT website at the public rate. Alternative local accommodation information can be provided upon request.

### **UEL Career Services**

You are entitled to these services at UEL:

- Career support and development
- Employment opportunities

For further information please visit the CASE website at:  
<https://uelac.sharepoint.com/sites/careerzone>

### **Sports Facilities on the UEL London Campus**

You will have access to UEL's £21 million sports facility, the Sports Dock, for a reduced price which is considerably cheaper than the prices available to the general public. There are three levels of membership available. For more information on the membership, please contact tel. 020 8223 6888 or e-mail [enquiries@sportsdock.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@sportsdock.co.uk). Please see the Sports Dock website for more information on their facilities: <https://www.uel.ac.uk/study/student-life/sport/sportsdock>.

### **Alumni**

As a UEL graduate, you will have full access to our alumni services after you have been awarded your degree. For more information, please see the UEL Alumni Network website <https://www.uel.ac.uk/about/alumni>.



The Student Entitlement 2024-25 Letter outlines the UEL services you are entitled to access as a student on one of UEL's collaborative programmes at the Centre for Alternative Technology. We will circulate this to all students once it is received from UEL and it will be added as an appendix to this document.

### **CAT Library Onsite**

The Graduate School has a modest onsite library that students can access when at CAT. It provides a quiet study space and a range of texts that serve all CAT's courses. As students are studying predominantly from home our focus is on providing electronic access to journals texts and papers as outlined below.

### **CAT Science Direct Access**

CAT subscribes to the Science Direct journal service which is a subscription to around 4500 journals and chapters from over 32,000 eBooks published by Elsevier. These are on a range of subjects ranging from the very relevant on sustainability topics, to a few more obscure titles. The journals have a vast catalogue of papers both historic and current. To access this service

visit [www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com). 'Sign in via your institution' and use your full CAT email address and the password that you use to login to Teams in order to access the service

The first time you use ScienceDirect you may be asked to create a local account (email address / first name / family name) with Elsevier on their 'register' page. This is separate to authentication using CAT credentials.

### **UEL Library Access**

You are entitled to access UEL Library, Archives and Learning Resources online (subject to license allowances) once you have received your UEL Network ID and Password.

A UEL Access card will be required if you want to access the library buildings. (see student support section above)

- 1) Go to the library website <https://www.uel.ac.uk/Discover/Library> and click the Intranet link and sign into the intranet.
- 2) The Intranet username will be in the following format: **U1234567@uel.ac.uk**. The Intranet password is the same as your IT password.
- 3) Then go to the Library area of the Intranet within the Services area: from there you can see the Library Search link and the Database A - Z link

### How to access databases

From the A - Z Database link choose your database and click the sign in off/on campus link. There should be a 'find organisation' field where you can search for the University of East London and a 'choose how to sign in' option from which you will need to select the University of East London. Sign in at the University of East London option and you can then sign into the database with your Intranet username and password.

**Find resources with Library search:** You can use [UEL's Library Search](#) to find what you need. Type a topic or keyword into the search box to see what is available, then filter the search using the options on the left-hand side of the screen.

**Ask a librarian for help:** If you need advice or help with your research, use the 'Ask A Librarian' chat service. Whether you need to know how to access a resource, or want to find out when the Library is open, 'Ask A Librarian' can help you to find the answer – refer to the directions below to access the 'Library' area of UEL's Intranet.

A useful place for information about the UEL Library, Archives and Learning Services Intranet. You can get to this from the 'Current Students: Library Login link on the UEL website: <https://www.uel.ac.uk/student-life/library> (login required). Also the Library's YouTube channel has lots of videos to get you started: [UEL Library, Archives and Learning Services - YouTube](#)

**Get subject-specific guidance:** Each of UEL's Schools has its own [subject librarian](#), who can offer advice and guidance in your research. This dedicated subject team can help you to find the best resources, analyse the quality of information and provide referencing advice.

Subject support pages provide a useful introduction to key information sources in the field, including relevant databases. You may also find it useful to look at the Subject Support pages for other disciplines, for instance to see which databases they recommend. Contact details for the ACE Subject Librarian are provided below.

The UEL ACE Subject Librarian can be contacted directly if required:

Nick Balmforth - ACE Subject Librarian

Library and Learning Services

University of East London

University Way, London, E16 2RD

Email: [n.j.balmforth@uel.ac.uk](mailto:n.j.balmforth@uel.ac.uk)

Telephone: 020 8223 7444

For more information on the UEL Library and Learning Resources, please see their website <https://libguides.uel.ac.uk/partners>



You are enrolled on a course of study leading to the award of a degree of the University of East London (UEL). As such, you are regarded as a student of the University of East London as well as Centre for Alternative Technology, both institutions work together to ensure the quality and standards of the course on which you are registered.

The final responsibility for all quality assurance, validation and standards' matters rests with UEL.

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) is an independent charity that works to benefit students and higher education providers, and is one of the world's experts in quality assurance. Their main work is to review Higher Education, against the expectations of the UK Quality Code (<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>) and provide advice and guidance for governments, regulatory agencies and higher education institutions globally to benefit UK higher education and its international reputation. The Quality Code is a key reference point for UK higher education, and enables education providers to understand what is expected of them in the interest of the public and students.

The QAA conducted a Gateway Quality Review of CAT in March 2022. The main purpose of the review was to investigate the higher education provision and to

**The independent QAA review team formed the following judgments about the higher education provision offered at the Centre for Alternative Technology:**

- There can be confidence that academic standards are reliable, meet UK requirements, and are reasonably comparable
- There can be confidence that the quality of the student academic experience meets baseline regulatory requirements

The full report can be downloaded from the QAA web site via: <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/quality-assurance-reports/Centre-for-Alternative-Technology>



- [Link to the Student Handbook page on Quality and Standards](#)



You may be in a position where you cannot submit your coursework or take an exam due to circumstances that are:

- **unforeseeable** - in that you could have no prior knowledge of the event concerned
- **unpreventable** - in that you could do nothing reasonably in your power to prevent such an event
- expected to have a **serious impact** on performance.

Please read the [Extension and Extenuating Circumstances Policy \(click here\)](#) for further details on your options if you are unable to meet a deadline. Students can apply for an Extension or Extenuating Circumstances using the [Student Forms Hub \(click here\)](#).



# COMPLAINTS & APPEALS

Academic Partner institutions are responsible for operating their own Complaints Procedure. The CAT GSE Complaints Policy and Procedure can be found on the [Current Students webpage \(click here\)](#). Please email the Student Support in the first instance, for the attention of the Student Support Manager, or email the Head of School ([adrian.watson@cat.org.uk](mailto:adrian.watson@cat.org.uk)).

Upon exhaustion of the CATs Complaints Procedure, students will be entitled to access [Stage 3: Review of UEL's Complaints Procedure \(click here\)](#) which shall be administered by UEL.

Students applying to Stage 3: Review of UEL's Complaints Procedure, must provide evidence that they have exhausted the partner institutions Complaints Procedure. Where UEL receives an application to Stage 3: Review of its Complaints Procedure and the student is unable to provide evidence that they have exhausted the partner institutions Complaints Procedure, the complaint shall be referred back to the partner institution.

All academic partner students have access to the [UEL appeals procedure \(click here\)](#). UEL Complaints and Appeals Team will administer the process and advise partner institution staff if required.



- [Link to the Student Handbook pages on Appeals and Complaints](#)
- [Link to the Complaints Procedure](#)
- [Link to the Student Policy on Academic Appeals](#)



CAT GSE Policies and Procedures can be found in the [Current Student area of the CAT Website](#) (click here). This includes:

- [Student Charter](#)
- [Student Admission Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Student Disciplinary Regulations and Procedures](#)
- [Equal Opportunities Policy Statement](#)
- [GSE Student Support and Welfare Services](#)
- [GSE Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures](#)
- [CAT - PREVENT Policy for Speakers and Events](#)
- [CAT Designated Event Process](#)
- [CAT - PREVENT Policy for Freedom of Speech](#)
- [CAT Extension Policy and Application Form](#)
- [CAT Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Procedures \(UEL\)](#)
- [Student Progression Rules](#)
- [Student Withdrawal Policy](#)
- [Student protection plan](#)

Application forms for the following can be found in the [GSE Form Hub \(click here\)](#):

- [Extenuating Circumstances Application Form](#)
- [Sudden & Severe Change of Circumstances Application Form](#)
- [Intermission Application Form](#)
- [Programme Transfer Application Form](#)
- [Programme Withdrawal Form](#)
- [RDP Submission Deferral Form](#)

UEL Services can be found using the following links:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Library Archives and Learning Services](#)
- [Manual of General Regulations](#)

## APPENDIX A: STUDENT LEARNING AND SUPPORT SUMMARY

<b>Sustainability and Adaptation programmes (GB, SA &amp; SEPDM)</b>	
<b>Student Learning Support summary for 2024-25.</b>	
<p><b>Purpose of the document:</b> this table provides a summary of the academic, pastoral and administrative support available for CAT's MSc SA programmes across all stages of students' engagement with the Graduate School of the Environment (GSE). Refer to Course Handbook 'KEY STAFF AND CONTACT DETAILS' and 'PROGRAMME OPERATION AND STUDENT REGISTRATION' for further information, including staff contact details.</p>	
Type of Student Learning Support	Provided by
<b>Pre-Course</b>	
<b>Admissions:</b>	
Open Days (onsite and virtual) & Visitors	Graduate School Marketing Officer (GSMO) & Student Support Officers (SSOs)
Applications	GSMO & SSOs
Admissions enquiries (general)	GSMO & SSOs
Academic admissions & entry requirements queries	Programme Leader (PL)
International students' enquiries	GSMO & Head of School (HoS)
<b>Enrolled Students</b>	
<b>Collaborative Student Entitlements from UEL</b>	
<p>The University of East London's student services that you are entitled to access as a student enrolled on one of UEL's collaborative programmes at the Centre for Alternative Technology (including UEL's 'Library and Learning Services') are set out within the '<b>Collaborative Student Entitlements Letter</b>' that is updated annually and typically made available within Appendixes to the Course Handbook.</p> <p>If you have any questions about any of the services you are entitled to at UEL, please contact the team at the Academic Partnership Office (APO) at UEL (<a href="mailto:apo@uel.ac.uk">apo@uel.ac.uk</a>), who will be happy to advise you further.</p>	
<b>Administrative Support</b>	
<p>All aspects of administrative support throughout your time on the programme, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Enrolment and induction.</b></li> <li>• <b>Course IT</b> including CAT student email, Outlook and MS Teams, UEL Moodle VLE access.</li> <li>• <b>Module booking and registration, booking food and accommodation</b> for residential study at CAT – note, food and accommodation is booked through the <a href="#">GSE Forms Hub</a>.</li> </ul>	Student Support Manager & SSOs

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coursework <b>assignment submission</b> procedures, accessing marks and feedback in <b>Moodle, Turnitin and UEL Direct</b>.</li> <li>• Clarifications and guidance on <b>CAT's student policies and procedures</b> – which can be downloaded from <a href="#">CAT's website</a>.</li> <li>• Clarifications and guidance on <b>coursework Extensions, Extenuating Circumstances and Sudden and Severe Changes of Circumstances</b> – noting the relevant policies, procedures and application forms are accessible from the <a href="#">GSE Form Hub (click here)</a>:</li> <li>• Clarifications and guidance on <b>Intermission</b> (study breaks), <b>Programme Transfer</b> and <b>Programme Withdrawal</b> – application forms are accessible from the <a href="#">GSE Form Hub (click here)</a>:</li> <li>• Providing <b>feedback</b> on module teaching and the overall student experience – survey links are accessible from the <a href="#">GSE Form Hub (click here)</a>:</li> <li>• Keeping <b>records of study and modules completed</b>.</li> <li>• Confirming time limits of study, student status, programme completion or withdrawal. Forwarding copies of award certificates given by UEL.</li> <li>• (Note, CAT's SSOs will in the vast majority of instances liaise with UEL's administrative staff on your behalf as necessary. The Course Handbook explains circumstances in which you may wish to contact UEL directly)</li> </ul>	
Fees terms and conditions / enquiries / payment	SSM & Student Finance Officer
<b>Academic Support</b>	
<p><b>1. Taught Study Skills &amp; Resources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>General Study Skills</b> – e.g. critical thinking, academic integrity, writing a good essay or critique of paper at MSc level, basic building physics, use of Excel and PowerPoint, etc.;</li> <li>• Self-directed study skills exercises and resources, Harvard Referencing, Personal Development Planning.</li> </ul>	<p>Personal tutor and study skills sessions tailored to the learning outcomes of specific modules. Self-directed. Resources available via Moodle (refer to the 'Information and Help' folders), <a href="#">UEL Library and Learning Services</a></p>

<p><b>2. Module Specific Support and Feedback:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Module and coursework specific study skills</b> – e.g. seminars during onsite modules &amp; available on-line, workbook tasks, recordings, ‘assignment specific Q&amp;A’ discussion forums etc. – typically made available through the module’s Team.</li> <li>• <b>Example coursework assignments and Extra Resources</b> (including example Dissertations) for each module – typically made available through the module’s Team.</li> <li>• <b>Assessment, moderation and feedback</b> on coursework.</li> <li>• <b>One-to-one support</b> from the Module Leader or member of the module delivery team (by request) e.g. to clarify coursework requirements, clarify feedback given or marks awarded.</li> </ul> <p>(Students on all modules, priority given to students with identified additional learning needs (ALN)).</p>	<p>Module Leaders &amp; module delivery teams</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Coursework development</b> including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ ‘First assignment support’ formative review of assignment structure or full first draft;</li> <li>○ Review of assignment structure and topic for subsequent assignments.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>(Priority given to students on modules 1-4 &amp; students identified with additional learning needs (ALN))</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for coursework re-submission.</li> </ul>	<p>Personal tutor</p> <p>Personal tutor, Module Leaders &amp; module delivery teams as appropriate</p> <p>Personal tutor &amp; Module Leaders as appropriate</p>
<p><b>3. Pastoral Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Personal Tutor</b>’s scope and remit are based on UEL’s ‘Personal Tutoring Policy’ – see ‘Support for Students’ section of the course handbook</li> <li>• Students should contact their Personal Tutor within the first 3 weeks of each term (min.).</li> </ul> <p>Personal tutors will invite their students to attend a one-to-one tutorial near the start of</p>	<p>Personal Tutor – each student is assigned a Personal Tutor after enrolment at the start of the programme and typically remains</p>

<p>each term (at least two per year) to provide guidance on non-module specific queries, such as students seeking advice regarding modules choices, general study planning, personal development planning etc.</p> <p>Students may contact their personal tutor in confidence at other times of year to seek guidance on specific academic matters, such as when personal circumstances are affecting the progression of study.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Officer:</b></li> </ul> <p>A dedicated member of academic/support staff acts as a central point of contact for students with specific educational needs, provide additional tutorial support by arrangement, and can liaise with relevant facilities at UEL/LJMU and externally – see below.</p>	<p>Head of School</p>
<p><b>4. Peer support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MSc Student Representatives ('Student Reps') elected from the MSc student body function as an ongoing conduit for student liaison and feedback on programme-wide matters – refer to the Course Handbook for further information.</li> <li>• Peer-to-peer informal support from fellow students.</li> </ul>	<p>Student Reps - current Student Reps can be contacted by email: MSc Student Reps <a href="mailto:msc.reps@student.cat.org.uk">msc.reps@student.cat.org.uk</a></p> <p>Peers, via online forums – MS Teams discussion boards. Student led social media platforms – including WhatsApp and Facebook groups, personal communication etc.</p>
<p><b>Academic Support for Dissertation Module</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Support throughout the Dissertation Module</li> </ul>	<p>Supervisor and Module Leaders – Refer to Dissertation Module Guidelines</p>
<p><b>Graduation Ceremony</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Booking a place and making arrangements to attend the GSE Graduation Ceremony at CAT</li> </ul>	<p>SSOs</p>
<p><b>Alumni &amp; Destinations</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enquiries and destination surveys etc.</li> <li>• Keeping in touch with CAT and the GSE, e.g. becoming a member of CAT, attending CAT's annual Conference, careers or marketing opportunities etc.</li> </ul>	<p>Programme Leader &amp; SSOs GSMO</p>
<p>Further details of module specific requirements and support will be made available through Module Specifications and Module Guides.</p>	

## APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY

CAT	Centre for Alternative Technology
DL	Distance Learning
GB	Green Building
GSE	Graduate School of the Environment
Moodle	Virtual (online) Learning Environment used by UEL and GSE
PGCert	Post Graduate Certificate
PGDip	Post Graduate Diploma
RDP	Dissertation Research Design Proposal
SA	Sustainability and Adaptation
SEPDM	Sustainability in Energy Provision and Demand Management
SSM	Student Support Manager
SSO	Student Support Officer
UEL	University of East London
VLE	Virtual (online) Learning Environment (e.g. Moodle/Teams)
WISE	Welsh Institute for Sustainable Education

## APPENDIX C: Academic Overview 2024\_25

Table 5.11

Month	Module Details	Onsite Week	Module Lead	Coursework	% of Module Grade	1st Sub	1st Sub Board	Re-sub	Resub Board	SA
Sep-24	<b>EV7132 (15 credits)</b> Introduction to Sustainability and Adaptation	9-13 Sept	<b>Tim Frances</b>	Critique (3000)	100%	04-Nov-24	Feb-25	05-Mar-25	Jun-25	<b>CORE</b>
Oct-24	<b>EV7128 (15 credits)</b> Energy Flows in Buildings	7-11 Oct	<b>Ivor Anna</b>	Essay (1800) Numerical Analysis (1200)	60% 40%	02-Dec-24	Jun-25	07-Jul-25	Oct-25	Optional
Nov-24	<b>EV7137 (15 credits)</b> Sustainability and Adaptation Concepts in Practice	4-8 Nov	<b>Emily Sam</b>	Report (3000)	100%	13-Jan-25	Jun-25	07-Jul-25	Oct-25	<b>CORE</b>
Dec-24	<b>EV7105 (15 credits)</b> Cities and Communities	2-6 Dec	<b>Sam Bryce</b>	Case Study (3000)	100%	03-Feb-25	Jun-25	07-Jul-25	Oct-25	Optional
Dec-24	<b>EV7129 (15 credits)</b> Food Systems and Sustainability	9-13 Dec	<b>Rebecca K Emily</b>	Case Study (3000)	100%	10-Feb-25	Jun-25	07-Jul-25	Oct-25	Optional
Feb-25	<b>EV7131 (15 credits)</b> Introduction to the Politics and Economics of the Environment	3-7 Feb	<b>Emily Sam</b>	Strategy (3000)	100%	31-Mar-25	Jun-25	07-Jul-25	Oct-25	Optional
Mar-25	<b>EV7108 (15 credits)</b> Energy Provision	3-7 March	<b>Alan Bryce</b>	Critique (2000) Presentation (1000)	65% 35%	28-Apr-25	Oct-25	03-Nov-25	Feb-26	Optional
Mar-25	<b>EV7127 (15 credits)</b> Ecosystems and Ecosystem Services	10-14 March	<b>Jane Alexandra</b>	Essay (2400) Presentation (600)	80% 20%	06-May-25	Oct-25	03-Nov-25	Feb-26	Optional

Apr-25	<b>EV7126 (15 credits)</b> Communicating Transformational Social Change	7-11 April	<b>Cathy</b> Emily	Communication (3000)	100%	02-Jun-25	Oct-25	03-Nov-25	Feb-26	Optional
Apr-25	<b>EV7136 (15 credits)</b> Restoration Ecology	28 April - 2 May	<b>Alexandra</b> Jane	Management Report (3000)	100%	23-Jun-25	Oct-25	03-Nov-25	Feb-26	Optional
May-25	<b>EV7125 (15 credits)</b> Applied Research Design Week	19-23 May	<b>Rebecca K</b> Emily	Poster (300) RDP (1800)	40% 60%	14-Jul-25	Oct-25	03-Nov-25	Feb-26	<b>CORE</b>
Jun-25	<b>EV7110 (15 credits)</b> Sustainable Materials in the Built Environment	23-27 June	<b>Tim</b> Anna	Essay (2400) Presentation (600)	80% 20%	27-Aug-25	Feb-26	02-Mar-26	Jun-26	Optional
Jun-25	<b>EV7130 (15 credits)</b> Transformational International Energy Management	30June - 4 July	<b>Sam</b> Alan	Report (3000)	100%	27-Aug-25	Feb-26	02-Mar-26	Jun-26	Optional

[END]