



AALBORG UNIVERSITET

CURRICULUM FOR THE MASTER'S PROGRAMME IN SUSTAINABLE CITIES, 2025, COPENHAGEN

MASTER OF SCIENCE (MSC) IN ENGINEERING
COPENHAGEN

[Link to this studyline](#)

Curriculum for the Master's Programme in Sustainable Cities, 2025, Copenhagen

Link(s) to other versions of the same line:

[Curriculum for the Master's Programme in Sustainable Cities, 2020, Copenhagen](#)

[Curriculum for the Master's Programme in Sustainable Cities, 2022, Copenhagen](#)

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§ 1: PREFACE

Pursuant to consolidation Act 391 of April 10, 2024 on Universities (the University Act), the following is established.

The programme also follows the Examination Policies and Procedures incl. the Joint Programme Regulations for Aalborg University.

§ 2: BASIS IN MINISTERIAL ORDERS

The Master's programme is organised in accordance with the Ministry of Higher Education and Science's Order no. 2285 of December 1, 2021 on Full-time University Programmes (the University Programme Order) with subsequent changes and Ministerial Order no. 2271 of December 1, 2021 on University Examinations (the Examination Order) with subsequent changes. Further reference is made to Ministerial Order no. 51 of January 14, 2024 (the Admission Order) and Ministerial Order no. 1125 of July 4, 2022 (the Grading Scale Order)

§ 3: CAMPUS

The programme is offered in Copenhagen.

§ 4: FACULTY AFFILIATION

The Master's programme falls under The Technical Faculty of IT and Design, Aalborg University.

§ 5: STUDY BOARD AFFILIATION

The Master's programme falls under Study Board of Planning and Surveying

§ 6: AFFILIATION TO CORPS OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

The Master's programme is associated with the external examiners corps on Civil engineering corps of external examiners

§ 7: ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants with a legal right of admission (retskrav)

- Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Engineering in Urban, Energy and Environmental Planning, Aalborg University (Campus Copenhagen)

Applicants without legal right of admission

- Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Engineering (Surveying, Planning and Land Management), Aalborg University
- Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Geography, Aalborg University
- Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Engineering in Urban, Energy and Environmental Planning, Aalborg University (Campus Aalborg)

Admission to the master's programme in Sustainable Cities requires that the applicant has passed a relevant qualifying bachelor's degree programme. A bachelor's degree programme is defined as relevant if the degree programme provides competencies to a minimum of ECTS within the following subject areas:

- Minimum 30 ECTS within the basic urban, energy or environmental planning subject area (e.g., but not limited to, spatial planning, city infrastructure, city design, urban geography, transport planning, heat planning, energy system analysis, renewable energy sources, energy savings, climate action planning, environmental assessment, environmental management, LCA, waste planning, resources, circular economy, participation, GIS)

As a prerequisite for admission to the master's programme, students must have completed a bachelor programme in technical sciences, a bachelor of engineering programme or a bachelor in natural science.

All applicants without a legal claim must prove that their English language qualifications is equivalent to level B (Danish level) in English

§ 8: THE PROGRAMME TITLE IN DANISH AND ENGLISH

The Master's programme entitles the graduate to the Danish designation *Civilingeniør, cand.polyt. i bæredygtig byudvikling*. The English designation is: Master of Science (MSc) in Engineering (Sustainable Cities).

§ 9: PROGRAMME SPECIFICATIONS IN ECTS CREDITS

The Master's programme is a 2-year, research-based, full-time study programme. The programme is set to 120 ECTS credits.

§ 10: RULES CONCERNING CREDIT TRANSFER (MERIT), INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITY FOR CHOICE OF MODULES THAT ARE PART OF ANOTHER PROGRAMME AT A UNIVERSITY IN DENMARK OR ABROAD

The Study Board can approve that passed programme elements from other educational programmes at the same level replaces programme elements within this programme (credit transfer).

Furthermore, the Study Board can, upon application, approve that parts of this programme is completed at another university or a further education institution in Denmark or abroad (pre-approval of credit transfer).

The Study Board's decisions regarding credit transfer are based on an academic assessment.

§ 11: EXEMPTIONS

The Study Board's possibilities to grant exemption, including exemption to further examination attempts and special examination conditions, are stated in the Examination Policies and Procedures published at this website:

<https://www.studyservice.aau.dk/rules>

§ 12: RULES FOR EXAMINATIONS

The rules for examinations are stated in the Examination Policies and Procedures published at this website:

<https://www.studyservice.aau.dk/rules>

§ 13: RULES CONCERNING WRITTEN WORK, INCLUDING THE MASTER'S THESIS

In the assessment of all written work, regardless of the language it is written in, weight is also given to the student's formulation and spelling ability, in addition to the academic content. Orthographic and grammatical correctness as well as stylistic proficiency are taken as a basis for the evaluation of language performance. Language performance must always be included as an independent dimension of the total evaluation. However, no examination can be assessed as 'Pass' on the basis of good language performance alone; similarly, an examination normally cannot be assessed as 'Fail' on the basis of poor language performance alone.

The Study Board can grant exemption from this in special cases (e.g., dyslexia or a native language other than Danish).

The Master's Thesis must include an English summary. If the project is written in English, the summary can be in Danish. The summary is included in the evaluation of the project as a whole.

§ 14: REQUIREMENTS REGARDING THE READING OF TEXTS IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

It is assumed that the student can read academic texts in English and use reference works, etc., in English and other European languages.

§ 15: COMPETENCE PROFILE ON THE DIPLOMA

The following competence profile will appear on the diploma:

A Candidatus graduate has the following competency profile:

A Candidatus graduate has competencies that have been acquired via a course of study that has taken place in a research environment.

A Candidatus graduate is qualified for employment on the labour market based on his or her academic discipline as well as for further research (PhD programmes). A Candidatus graduate has, compared to a Bachelor, developed his or her academic knowledge and independence so as to be able to apply scientific theory and method on an independent basis within both an academic and a professional context.

§ 16: COMPETENCE PROFILE OF THE PROGRAMME

The curriculum for the Master's programme in Engineering in Sustainable Cities takes point of departure from the possibilities and barriers cities and regions have globally to create sustainable futures and to address the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The curriculum focuses on the environmental sustainability of the three Sustainable Development pillars and focuses mainly on cities in developed countries. The curriculum focuses on elements from the following 7 goals out of the 17 SDGs: Clean water and sanitation, Affordable and clean energy, Decent work and economic growth, Industry, innovation and infrastructure, Sustainable cities and communities, Responsible consumption and production, and Climate action.

The graduate of the Master's programme

Knowledge

- Has knowledge, based on the latest international research, on four key areas of sustainable cities that cover assessment, implementation and governance
- Has knowledge of concepts of sustainability and sustainable development in cities: Sustainable Development and the United Nations Sustainable Development goals:
 - Challenges and problems with resources, climate change, pollution, health impacts, population and biodiversity caused by or in the city/urban area
 - Infrastructure and technology alternatives within resources, energy, mobility and water/climate change that address environmental sustainability
 - Has knowledge of the design and development of sustainable cities
 - Framework conditions (local, regional, international)
 - Roles of actors and society and interplay between them
 - Power, politics and policies, implementation and public regulation
 - Economic, social and environmental impacts
- Has knowledge of the organisational structures of sustainable cities and barriers in relation to sustainable urban transitions
- Economic aspects at the national, regional, city and project level including socio-economy and business models
- Urban planning processes and activities
- Has knowledge of the relevant research methods, theories of science relevant to the analysis of sustainable urban and infrastructural system development, and research ethics

Skills

- Use selected theories, methods and tools to develop proposals for relevant sustainable alternatives for resource consumption, energy, mobility, water/climate change and synergies between these
- Critically reflect on theory, assessment methods and tools, and the results and conclusions of analysis in the given fields
- Can combine and use relevant theories, understandings, methods and analyses in such a way that these form a synthesis aimed at the formulation of concrete strategies and plans with sustainable solutions
- Can understand and reflect on the relation between institutions, organisations and other actors; their dynamics and their interaction
- Can reflect critically on the relations between growth, innovation and sustainable development
- Can analyse and understand the handling of problems related to sustainable urban development at a societal level, including the integration of policies, instruments and institutional aspects seen in relation to the way in which society handles problems of sustainability

Competencies

- Can independently work to fulfil the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals by:
 - Independently preparing, structuring and evaluating strategies, plans and projects
 - Independently collecting data in relation to relevant societal problems and assessing the quality and reliability of this data
 - Assessing the sustainability impacts of different sustainable alternatives
- Can reflect critically on the selection of theories, methods, tools and approaches and critically assess results and conclusions of the problem-based project work
- Can address the complex combination of challenges related to sustainable urban development at the organisational, institutional and societal level in their study and problem-based project work
- Can independently assess technical, economic, social and environmental impacts in relation to sustainable urban development

- Can participate in interdisciplinary cooperation in relation to economic, social and environmental assessment
- Can construct relevant, alternative solutions and make a justified selection from these based on scientific theory and methods
- Can initiate and participate in interdisciplinary teams within the field of sustainable cities, working with the implementation of strategies, plans and projects in Danish or international contexts
- Can understand the complex processes taking place in connection with the design and implementation of strategies, plans and projects in which both public and private interests are evident
- Can use the acquired knowledge to create and initiate open and democratic decision processes in planning through public participation in the development, design and implementation of strategies, plans and projects
- Can independently assume responsibility for his/her own professional development and specialisation

- Can independently develop his/her competences and specialisation on a continuous basis through the acquisition of new knowledge

§ 17: STRUCTURE AND CONTENTS OF THE PROGRAMME

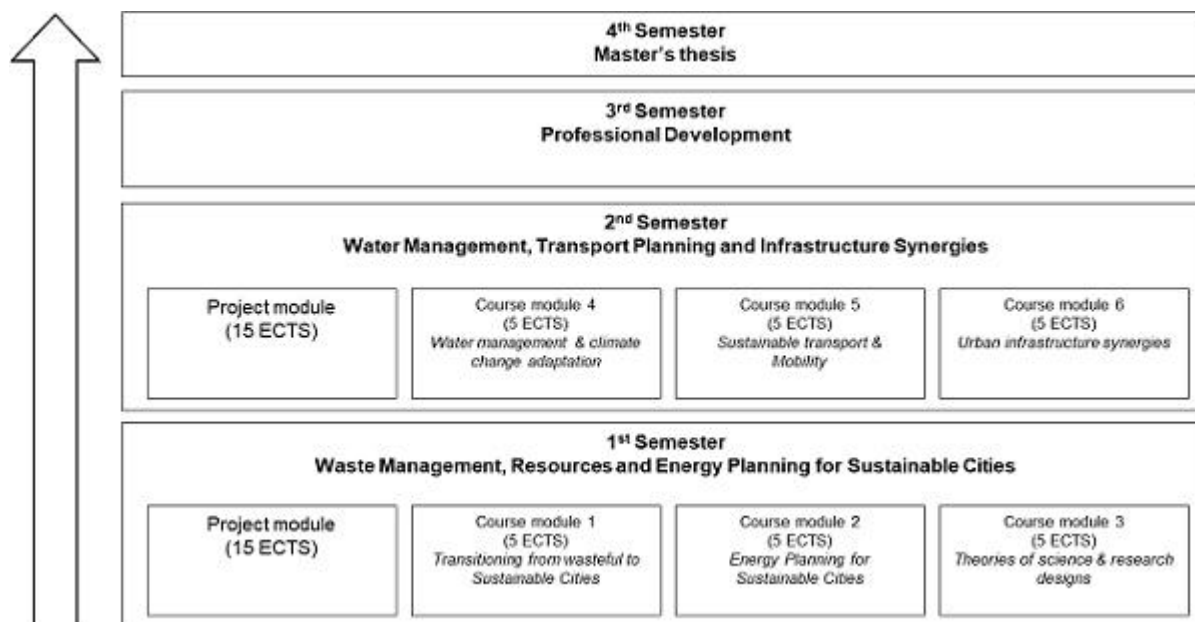
The programme is structured in modules and organised as a problem-based study. A module is a programme element or a group of programme elements, which aims to give students a set of professional skills within a fixed time frame specified in ECTS credits, and concluding with one or more examinations within specific exam periods. Examinations are defined in the curriculum.

The programme is based on a combination of academic, problem-oriented and interdisciplinary approaches and organised based on the following work and evaluation methods that combine skills and reflection:

- lectures
- class teaching
- project work
- workshops
- assignment work (individually and in groups)
- teacher feedback
- professional reflection
- portfolio work
- pin-up presentations, etc.

§ 18: OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAMME

The figure below presents an overview of the contents and course of the programme:



The programme's first two semesters are focused on the four infrastructure sectors, theories of science and research design as well as infrastructure synergies. Within each of the infrastructure courses tools, theories and methods are introduced that may also be relevant to apply for other sectors or across sectors. Cross-disciplinary courses address the cross-sectoral concerns. The courses for each infrastructure sector use a stepwise approach:

1. Mapping the sector (e.g. CO₂ amounts, water amounts)
2. Sustainable engineering solutions (e.g. waste water basins, biking, district heating)
3. Implementation and planning i.e.
 - Mapping the market
 - Policy change and/or economic assessment Opportunities / challenges (e.g. new jobs, risks, health)
4. Opportunities / challenges (e.g. new jobs, risks, health)

The first semester themes are waste, resources and energy planning and students are encouraged to focus the project module on these sectors. In the second semester, transport/mobility as well as water management and climate change adaptation are the focus. Students are encouraged to focus the project module on these two sectors, but are required to also include at least one other sector to identify potential conflicts and synergies within challenges and solutions. This is supported by the urban infrastructure synergies course.

The focus of the third and fourth semester is to further develop and enhance the skills acquired in semester one and two. The focus throughout the program is environmental sustainable development and 7 of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In general, these are related in the following way to the courses:

- *Transitioning from Wasteful to Sustainable Cities*
 - SDG: Responsible consumption and production; Decent work and economic growth
- *Energy Planning for Sustainable Cities*
 - SDG: Affordable and clean energy
- *Water Management and Climate Change Adaptation*
 - SDG equivalent: Clean water and sanitation; Climate action
- *Sustainable Transport and Mobility*
 - SDG equivalent: Sustainable cities and communities
- *Urban Infrastructure Synergies*
 - SDG equivalent: Industry, innovation and infrastructure; Sustainable cities and communities

The table below presents an overview of project modules and course modules of the four semesters of the Master's programme:

All modules are assessed through individual grading according to the 7-point scale *or* passed/not passed. All modules are assessed by external examination (external grading) *or* internal examination (internal grading) *or* by assessment by the supervisor only.

Offered as: 1-professional

Module name	Course type	ECTS	Applied grading scale	Evaluation method	Assessment method	Language
1 SEMESTER						
Waste Management, Resources and Energy Planning in Sustainable Cities (PLSUSK22101)	Project	15	7-point grading scale	Internal examination	Oral exam based on a project	English
Theories of Science and Research Designs (PGLSUSK19102)	Course	5	7-point grading scale	Internal examination	Written or oral exam	English
Transitioning from Wasteful to Sustainable Cities (PLSUSK25103)	Course	5	Passed/Not Passed	Internal examination	Written or oral exam	English
Energy Planning for Sustainable Cities (PGLSUSK19104)	Course	5	7-point grading scale	Internal examination	Written or oral exam	English
2 SEMESTER						
Water Management, Transport Planning and Infrastructure Synergies (PLSUSK22201)	Project	15	7-point grading scale	External examination	Oral exam based on a project	English
Water Management and Climate Change Adaptation (PLSUSK25202)	Course	5	Passed/Not Passed	Internal examination	Written or oral exam	English
Sustainable Transport and Mobility (PGLSUSK19203)	Course	5	7-point grading scale	Internal examination	Written or oral exam	English
Urban Infrastructure Synergies (PGLSUSK19204)	Course	5	7-point grading scale	Internal examination	Written or oral exam	English
3 SEMESTER Option A						
Professional Development (PGLSUSK20301)	Project	30	7-point grading scale	Internal examination	Oral exam based on a project	English
3-4 SEMESTER Option B						
Master's Thesis (PLSUSK22302)	Project	60	7-point grading scale	External examination	Master's thesis/final project	English
4 SEMESTER						
Master's Thesis (PLSUSK22401)	Project	30	7-point grading scale	External examination	Master's thesis/final project	English

International or National Credit

After pre-approval by the Study Board, the 3rd semester may be transferred to another educational institution. Approval (pre-credit) requires that these studies in question can give the student appropriate know-ledge, skills and competencies.

§ 19: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

All students who have not participated in Aalborg University's PBL introductory course during their Bachelor's degree must attend the introductory course "Problem-based Learning and Project Management". The introductory course must be approved before the student can participate in the project exam. For further information, please see Department of Sustainability and Planning's website.

§ 20: COMMENCEMENT AND TRANSITIONAL RULES

The curriculum is approved by the dean and enters into force as of September 1, 2025.

The Study Board does not offer teaching after the previous curriculum from 2022 after the summer examinations 2026.

The Study Board will offer examinations after the previous curriculum, if there are students who have used examination attempts in a module without passing. The number of examination attempts follows the rules in the Examination Order.

§ 21: AMENDMENTS TO THE CURRICULUM AND REGULATIONS

The Vice dean of Education has on February 12, 2025, approved that the prerequisite for enrollment for the exam is erased in the module *Water Management, Transport Planning and Infrastructure Synergies*, valid from Spring 2025.