



COURSE OUTLINE

ENP411 Advanced Planning Policy and Practice

School: School of Law and Society

2026 | Trimester 1

UniSC Sunshine Coast

BLENDED
LEARNING

Most of your course is on campus but you may be able to do some components of this course online.

Please go to usc.edu.au for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.

1. What is this course about?

1.1. Description

This advanced course will extend your knowledge of theory and law through policy and strategic planning at multiple levels of governance. You will cover complex decision-making involving statutory and non-statutory instruments including public works impact assessment. Throughout the course, the knowledge and skills required by the professional planner in practice and planning ethics are addressed through incorporating visiting practitioners and workshop sessions to problem-solve current planning practice issues.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLENDED LEARNING			
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – On campus Workshop	2hrs	Week 1	10 times
Learning materials – Learning materials are available online and delivered asynchronously. The material consists predominantly engagement with key resources and interactive learning platforms.	1hr	Week 1	12 times

1.3. Course Topics

Extending knowledge of theory and law through policy and strategic planning at multiple levels of governance.

Complex decision-making involving statutory and non-statutory instruments including major project impact assessment.

Planning ethics.

Problem-solving and evaluation of current planning practice issues in the context of best practice planning policy and adequate data and monitoring.

2. What level is this course?

400 Level (Graduate)

Demonstrating coherence and breadth or depth of knowledge and skills. Independent application of knowledge and skills in unfamiliar contexts. Meeting professional requirements and AQF descriptors for the degree. May require pre-requisites where discipline specific introductory or developing knowledge or skills is necessary. Normally undertaken in the third or fourth full-time study year of an undergraduate program.

3. What is the unit value of this course?

12 units

4. How does this course contribute to my learning?

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES	GRADUATE QUALITIES MAPPING	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD MAPPING *
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...	Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...	Education for Sustainable Development Goals
1 Perform critical analysis and demonstrate strategic thinking and Problem solving skills as applied to a diverse range of regional and urban planning issues	Creative and critical thinker Empowered	
2 Demonstrate knowledge application of suitable Sustainable Development Goals/ New Urban Agenda	Sustainability-focussed	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
3 Demonstrate a capacity to reflect on personal values and professional practice to inform theory	Ethical Engaged	
4 Demonstrate understanding of planning theory and principles as well as the need for and use of credible information for planning policy and strategy	Knowledgeable Empowered	
5 Effective written communication to appropriate audience	Knowledgeable Empowered Ethical	

* Competencies by Professional Body

CODE	COMPETENCY
EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS	
1	No poverty: End poverty in all its forms everywhere
3	Good Health and Well-being: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
4	Quality Education: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
5	Gender Equality: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
6	Clean Water and Sanitation: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
7	Affordable and Clean Energy: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and clean energy for all
8	Decent Work and Economic Growth: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
9	Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure: Build infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
10	Reduced Inequalities: Reduce inequality within and among countries
11	Sustainable Cities and Communities: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
12	Responsible Consumption and Production: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
13	Climate Action: urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
14	Life below Water: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

CODE COMPETENCY

15	Life on Land: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
16	Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
17	Partnerships for the Goals: Strengthen the implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development

5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the [UniSC Glossary of terms](#) for definitions of “pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites”.

5.1. Pre-requisites

Not applicable

5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

5.3. Anti-requisites

Not applicable

5.4. Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

Not applicable

6. How am I going to be assessed?**6.1. Grading Scale**

Standard Grading (GRD)

High Distinction (HD), Distinction (DN), Credit (CR), Pass (PS), Fail (FL).

6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

Timely and detailed feedback is provided for each assessment. Feedback is provided both within text and general comments to build scholarly skills. Students are able to seek feedback through face-to-face discussion with the course coordinator. Tutorials will include extended discussion and review of the assessment task requirements and scope.

6.3. Assessment tasks

DELIVERY MODE	TASK NO.	ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP	WEIGHTING %	WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH?	WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT?	WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT?
All	1	Essay	Individual	10%	1000 words	Week 4	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	2	Report	Individual	50%	3000 words	Week 8	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	3	Examination - not Centrally Scheduled	Individual	40%	The examinee will take place during tutorial hours to prepare a written brief 90 minutes. Aim to be there 15 minutes prior.	Week 12	In Class

All - Assessment Task 1: Mini Essay

GOAL:	To demonstrate evidence of how theory and practice inform each other (theory-practice dialectic).	
PRODUCT:	Essay	
FORMAT:	Write an essay on concepts and methods used to address a current planning issue and explain how this demonstrates or informs planning theory (including ethics and the concept of power) on the topic.	
CRITERIA:	<p>No.</p> <p>1 Demonstrated understanding of application of planning techniques to address an issue in practice.</p> <p>2 Demonstrated understanding of planning theory (which could include ethics).</p>	Learning Outcome assessed 3 4 1
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Information literacy	

All - Assessment Task 2: Report

GOAL:	Analyse how a critical planning issue is addressed strategically at multiple levels of governance, develop solutions to local government statutory and/ or non-statutory instruments, and test applicability to a real development proposal.	
PRODUCT:	Report	
FORMAT:	<p>Imagine you are a strategic planner working for a authority. Write a report to your senior staff member and/or elected officials recommending how to address a nominated strategic planning issue (e.g. peak oil, public transit, climate adaptation, liveability, affordable housing, disaster preparedness) through the mechanisms that are currently available. Your report will include:</p> <p>1) An analysis of how the issue is addressed in 'best planning practice' as identified in the literature, and assessment of relevant international, national, and state government policies, as well as council planning strategy papers for consistency with best practice.</p> <p>2) Examples of how the relevant best practice principles and council strategy could be implemented through statutory and non-statutory mechanisms by:</p> <p>a) writing an amendment to a relevant planning scheme and code; and</p> <p>b) including provisions in non-regulatory mechanisms such as the Corporate Plan, community plan, design strategy, action plans, and/or council budget.</p> <p>3) a review of an existing development or a current development application to determine if it is consistent with, or how it would need to be revised to be consistent with, the visions and directions in a strategy paper and the planning scheme.</p>	
CRITERIA:	<p>No.</p> <p>1 Critical analysis of planning issue and reference to best practice from literature</p> <p>2 Critical assessment of multiple levels of policies with reference to best practice.</p> <p>3 Demonstrated understanding of the existing planning scheme and codes, applicability to an existing development or current development application, and appropriateness of alternative solutions.</p> <p>4 Demonstrated understanding of non-regulatory mechanisms of implementing policy and best practice.</p> <p>5 Succinct well-structured written communication.</p>	Learning Outcome assessed 1 4 1 4 1 2 4 4 4 5
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Organisation, Information literacy	

All - Assessment Task 3: Ministerial Briefing Paper

GOAL:	To demonstrate competency and knowledge on how to succinctly prepare a brief for a State or Commonwealth government Minister on a complex planning issue and provide principled and evidence-informed advice.	
PRODUCT:	Examination - not Centrally Scheduled	
FORMAT:	<p>Deliverable: a maximum 4 pages long Ministerial Briefing Note (or a short "Policy Brief") based on the following:</p> <p>Each student will receive prior the exam:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- A policy topic (e.g. "Regional climate adaptation" or "Transport Planning for children").- Readings are based on canvas learning materials: studies, data, stakeholder positions, and maybe a media article.-A briefing template (example below). <p>Students can prepare notes, outlines, and practice identifying evidence-informed recommendations.</p> <p>Only printed notes, readings, data tables, or a policy dossier, but no devices are allowed).</p> <p>At the beginning of the exam each participant will receive a scenario prompt and/or a two new pieces of data to assess level of adaptive reasoning and ethical practice standard.</p>	
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed
	1 Critical analysis of perceived strengths and weaknesses of the proposal with supporting evidence.	1 2 4
	2 Demonstration of knowledge and application of advanced planning and impact assessment principles to inform recommendations for improved decision-making process.	2 4
	3 Succinct written communication.	4 5
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Organisation, Information literacy	

7. Directed study hours

A 12-unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

8. What resources do I need to undertake this course?

Please note: Course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Canvas site— Please log in as soon as possible.

8.1. Prescribed text(s) or course reader

There are no required/recommended resources for this course.

8.2. Specific requirements

Lists of required and recommended readings may be found for this course on its Canvas site. These materials/readings will assist you in preparing for tutorials and assignments, and will provide further information regarding particular aspects of your course.

9. How are risks managed in this course?

Health and safety risks for this course have been assessed as low. It is your responsibility to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers and understand the health and safety risks associated with your specific course of study and to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the [online induction training for students](#), and following the instructions of the University staff.

10. What administrative information is relevant to this course?

10.1. Assessment: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation. It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline. This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person. You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Canvas, are electronically checked through Turnitin. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work to which Turnitin has access.

10.2. Assessment: Additional Requirements

Eligibility for Supplementary Assessment

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:

- (a) The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%; and
- (b) The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale

10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submissions may be penalised up to and including the following maximum percentage of the assessment task's identified value, with weekdays and weekends included in the calculation of days late:

- (a) One day: deduct 5%;
- (b) Two days: deduct 10%;
- (c) Three days: deduct 20%;
- (d) Four days: deduct 40%;
- (e) Five days: deduct 60%;
- (f) Six days: deduct 80%;
- (g) Seven days: A result of zero is awarded for the assessment task.

The following penalties will apply for a late submission for an online examination:

Less than 15 minutes: No penalty

From 15 minutes to 30 minutes: 20% penalty

More than 30 minutes: 100% penalty

10.4. SafeUniSC

UniSC is committed to a culture of respect and providing a safe and supportive environment for all members of our community. For immediate assistance on campus contact SafeUniSC by phone: [07 5430 1168](#) or using the [SafeZone](#) app. For general enquires contact the SafeUniSC team by phone [07 5456 3864](#) or email safe@usc.edu.au.

The SafeUniSC Specialist Service is a Student Wellbeing service that provides free and confidential support to students who may have experienced or observed behaviour that could cause fear, offence or trauma. To contact the service call [07 5430 1226](#) or email studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au.

10.5. Study help

For help with course-specific advice, for example what information to include in your assessment, you should first contact your tutor, then your course coordinator, if needed.

If you require additional assistance, the Learning Advisers are trained professionals who are ready to help you develop a wide range of academic skills. Visit the [Learning Advisers](#) web page for more information, or contact Student Central for further assistance: +61 7 5430 2890 or studentcentral@usc.edu.au.

10.6. Wellbeing Services

Student Wellbeing provide free and confidential counselling on a wide range of personal, academic, social and psychological matters, to foster positive mental health and wellbeing for your academic success.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au or call 07 5430 1226.

10.7. AccessAbility Services

Ability Advisers ensure equal access to all aspects of university life. If your studies are affected by a disability, learning disorder mental health issue, injury or illness, or you are a primary carer for someone with a disability or who is considered frail and aged, [AccessAbility Services](#) can provide access to appropriate reasonable adjustments and practical advice about the support and facilities available to you throughout the University.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email AccessAbility@usc.edu.au or call 07 5430 2890.

10.8. Links to relevant University policy and procedures

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs
- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Conduct
- Students with a Disability

For more information, visit <https://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching>

10.9. Student Charter

UniSC is committed to excellence in teaching, research and engagement in an environment that is inclusive, inspiring, safe and respectful. The [Student Charter](#) sets out what students can expect from the University, and what in turn is expected of students, to achieve these outcomes.

10.10. General Enquiries

In person:

- **UniSC Sunshine Coast** - Student Central, Ground Floor, Building C, 90 Sippy Downs Drive, Sippy Downs
- **UniSC Moreton Bay** - Service Centre, Ground Floor, Foundation Building, Gympie Road, Petrie
- **UniSC SouthBank** - Student Central, Building A4 (SW1), 52 Merivale Street, South Brisbane
- **UniSC Gympie** - Student Central, 71 Cartwright Road, Gympie
- **UniSC Fraser Coast** - Student Central, Student Central, Building A, 161 Old Maryborough Rd, Hervey Bay
- **UniSC Caboolture** - Student Central, Level 1 Building J, Cnr Manley and Tallon Street, Caboolture

Tel: +61 7 5430 2890

Email: studentcentral@usc.edu.au