



QUALITY
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**Bachelor's Programme in
Urban Design for the City in Transition (UDCT)
University of Palermo**

EVALUATION REPORT

After an in-depth examination of its academic curriculum and teaching pedagogy, the BSc Programme in Urban Design for the City in Transition offered in the University of Palermo has been conferred the AESOP Certificate of Quality.

The Bachelor of Science in Urban Design for the City in Transition delivered at University of Palermo has been evaluated by two members of the AESOP Excellence in Education Board (EEB) appointed by the Chair. The EEB certifies that the above programme fulfils the Quality Recognition criteria.

General information

The UDCT is a bachelor-level programme addressing planning and design in transitional urban contexts, with a focus on cultural heritage, sustainability, and social inclusion. It demonstrates an evolving international orientation and a strong engagement with real-world challenges. The programme supports collaborative learning and includes workshops, field activities, and interdisciplinary approaches.

Quality in Planning Education

The Bachelor of Science in Urban Design for the City in Transition delivered at University of Palermo brings together the following aspects of quality in planning education:

Key Characteristics of the Planning Programme

The UDCT programme is distinctive in its integration of **cultural heritage with urban regeneration**, its **multi-scalar spatial focus**, and its **commitment to socially**



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responsive urban design. The programme demonstrates innovation in education through its use of thematic workshops and its strong connection to local urban realities.

Principles of Pedagogy

The programme applies student-centred learning approaches, including **hands-on studios, flipped classrooms, peer-to-peer formats, and problem-based learning.** Collaboration with communities and stakeholders is embedded, and practical reasoning is developed through both classroom and field-based learning.

- Planning perspectives

Students are exposed to a variety of perspectives, including **global contexts, cross-disciplinarity, and contemporary socio-spatial challenges.** Ethical responsibility and reflexive thinking are also embedded in course content and learning activities.

- Themes /contents

The curriculum covers a rich range of topics, including planning theory, GIS and mapping, history of cities, and sustainable regeneration. Particular emphasis is placed on **social inclusion, environmental responsibility, and heritage-sensitive design.**

- Skills development

The programme promotes **skills in research and inquiry, independent and group learning, and decision-making.** It includes opportunities for students to engage with real projects and communities, and fosters practical and critical thinking.

- Institutional/programme settings

The institution demonstrates **inclusivity**, with support systems for diverse student profiles. Student engagement in curriculum development is structured and ongoing, through bodies such as the Programme Board and Alumni Day. Excellence is promoted through international collaborations and hybrid teaching initiatives.



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Showcase Practices

The programme's "learning by doing" and interactive approach, along with its integration of social actors and real contexts, represents a strong pedagogical asset. Students are engaged in project-based studios and fieldwork that connect academic knowledge with the realities of Palermo and its surrounding region. By working closely with local communities, public institutions, and private stakeholders, they develop both technical and relational competences essential for contemporary planning practice. This hands-on methodology fosters critical thinking, collaborative problem-solving, and a deep understanding of the social and territorial dynamics that shape urban transformation. As such, the programme not only trains future planners but also contributes actively to the city's ongoing processes of innovation and regeneration.

The AESOP Certificate of Quality and this Evaluation Report are valid for a period of six years (2025-2031).

26/10/2025

Tijana Dabovic
Chair
AESOP
Excellence in Education Board

Giancarlo Cotella
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After a thorough examination of its academic curriculum and teaching pedagogies, the

**Bachelor's Programme in
Urban Design for the City in Transition**
offered by
University of Palermo

has been highly distinguished with the

AESOP CERTIFICATE OF QUALITY

We certify that:

This programme fulfils the European quality standards of planning programmes according to the AESOP Charter, complemented by an effective internationalization of teaching and learning processes. The AESOP Certificate of Quality is valid for a period of six years (2025-2031).

26 October 2025

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