



Master of Science in Spatial Planning and Urban Project
Faculty of Engineering and Faculty of Architecture
University of Porto

Evaluation Report

After an in-depth examination of its academic curriculum and teaching pedagogy, the MSc in Spatial Planning and Urban Project, offered by the Faculty of Engineering and the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Porto, has been conferred the AESOP Certificate of Quality.

The Master of Science in Spatial Planning and Urban Project, offered at the University of Porto, 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.

Quality in Planning Education

The MSc in Spatial Planning and Urban Project offered at the University of Porto is distinctive in its integration of spatial planning, urban policy, and urban project/design within a single A3ES-accredited programme, engaging contemporary urban challenges across European and Global South contexts. It brings together the following aspects of quality in planning education.

Key Characteristics of the Programme

- A clear and deliberate programme identity within Portuguese and European planning education, integrating spatial planning, urban policy, and urban project/design into a single A3ES-accredited offer, with strong awareness of Global South contexts and an explicit positioning at the intersection of urbanism, urban design, and territorial planning.



QUALITY RECOGNITION **AESOP**

- An effective project-based studio (EPU) that develops analytical and technical capacity through cross-scale exploration of urban patterns, combining traditional and digital techniques and fostering systems and critical thinking through continuous in-class discussion of student proposals.
- Fostering students' awareness of their social role as planning professionals and agents of change, supported by a diverse international cohort, English-language scientific literature, dissertations co-supervised with international scholars, and direct engagement with communities, institutions, and practitioners across European and Global South contexts.

Principles of Pedagogy

- An effective integration of problem-based and project-based learning in the studio course (EPU), structured around a step-by-step methodology from pattern identification through to design proposal, developing students' capacities for research formulation, reasoned argumentation, analytical thinking, and the generation of innovative spatial solutions.
- An excellent balance between individual and collaborative learning, supported by iterative design processes, interim reviews, and continuous discussion with lecturers of diverse backgrounds, encouraging students to test alternative solutions, defend their reasoning, and critically reflect on the ethical, social, and institutional consequences of planning choices.
- A strong bridge between planning education and professional practice, enabled through presentations to municipalities, external institutions, and practitioners, alongside theoretical modules that link conceptual debates with case-study analysis and reflection-on-action, reinforcing students' professional identity and sense of responsibility.

Showcase Practices

- Urban Environmental Quality Planning (PQAU) course, which combines a flipped-learning approach to theoretical content with practical workgroups that address climate adaptation, urban resilience, flood risks, and climate justice, fostering independent learning and active engagement with emerging planning challenges.





- Urban and Metropolitan Policies (PUM) course, which develops students' comparative research capacity through a structured group project analysing metropolitan governance models across diverse international contexts, leveraging the cohort's cultural and disciplinary diversity to compare Brazilian, African, European, and Portuguese cases and critically reflect on convergence, divergence, and bias across planning traditions.

The AESOP Certificate of Quality and this Evaluation Report are valid for a period of six years (2026-2032).

15 June 2026

Tijana Dabovic
Chair
AESOP
Excellence in Education Board

Giancarlo Cotella
AESOP Secretary General
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Juliana Martins
Assessor
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QUALITY
RECOGNITION
AESOP

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

Master of Science in Spatial Planning and Urban Project

offered by

Faculty of Engineering and Faculty of Architecture
University of Porto

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 (2026-2032).

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