



Structure.

Structure of the learning package

Making Better Places comprises five units:

Who makes the town: Powergram addresses the question: ‘How do things get built?’ Students consider the factors and people that influence the development of towns and cities, and how complex issues are negotiated between different interest groups such as suppliers, producers, mediators and users.

Student learning and output:

- informs students about the design process
- develops understanding of how different power groups affect urban development
- develops negotiating and problem-solving skills.

What makes a good place? introduces and explores five urban design qualities: permeability; variety/diversity; legibility; robustness, and vitality. Students apply these qualities to make informed decisions about the development of a selected site, and use 3-dimensional modelling tools to visualise their ideas.

Student learning and output:

- introduces design principles that apply to making urban places
- increases awareness of urban design
- develops negotiating skills and teamworking abilities.

Walkabout: Learning from the built environment encourages students to explore either their local environment or a case study of the Westgate Shopping Centre in Oxford to observe the urban design qualities they have learned about in the previous sessions.

Student learning and output:

- develops fieldwork techniques
- encourages the use of observation, information gathering and analytical skills as students collect background information and plan a presentation or report.

How to make a better place applies design principles based on the five urban design qualities. Students relate these to the site they have visited and outline development solutions.

Student learning and output:

- reinforces understanding of urban design principles in relation to a real site
- develops analytical and presentation skills.



Making a better place is the final unit. Students express their urban design ideas and create solutions for stated problems by manipulating building blocks on a chosen site.

Student learning and output:

- encourages application of theory to provide practical design solutions
- develops presentation skills, including the use of 2D and 3D modelling techniques.

Structure of the units

Each unit contains:

- a brief description of the learning outcomes, aims and objectives that provides a theoretical and practical output for each learning experience
- a time frame that gives an indication of the amount of time needed to execute each exercise or activity
- suggestions for organising the class for the activities and lessons
- lesson notes that describe what the materials cover and how to use them
- downloads such as activity sheets, handbooks, graphs, photos and video clips (all the downloads are also available from the 'download' section of the website)
- suggestions for organising the classroom depending on the types of activity.