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**Royal Institute of British Architects**

**Report of the RIBA Visiting Board  
to the University College for the  
Creative Arts at Canterbury,  
Epsom, Farnham, Maidstone &  
Rochester**

**Confirmed by RIBA Education Committee  
29 November 2006**

**Canterbury School of Architecture**

**BA (Hons) Architecture Part One  
Graduate Diploma in Architecture Part Two**

Date of Visiting Board: 12/13 October 2006

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## 1. Information About the Courses

### 1.1 Courses offered for revalidation:

**BA (Hons) Architecture** Part 1  
3 years full time

**Graduate Diploma in Architecture** Part 2  
2 years full time or 3 years part time.

### 1.2 Address of the Institution where the courses are delivered

Canterbury School of Architecture  
University College for the Creative Arts at Canterbury,  
Epsom, Farnham, Maidstone and Rochester  
New Dover Road  
Canterbury CT1 3AN

T: +44 (0) 1227 817302  
W: [www.ucreative.ac.uk](http://www.ucreative.ac.uk)

### 1.3 Name of Awarding Body

University of Kent (until 2007)  
University College for the Creative Arts at Canterbury,  
Epsom, Farnham, Maidstone and Rochester (from 2008)

### 1.4 Name of Head of School

Professor Oren Lieberman

## 2. Membership of the Visiting Board

### 2.1 The members of the RIBA Visiting Board for the visit on 12/13 October 2006 were:

Professor David Dernie (Chair)  
Patrick Monaghan (Vice-Chair)  
Jack Dunne  
Carol Norton  
Steve Banister (Regional Nominee)  
Malcolm Macourt (Non-Architect Member)  
Dhruv Sookhoo (Graduate/Student Member)

Stephanie Beasley-Suffolk (RIBA) was in attendance as Secretary to the Board.

The Board is grateful to Ms Marion Wilks who acted as Institutional Facilitator during the visit.

## 3. Procedures & Criteria for the Visit

### 3.1 The Visiting Board was carried out under the 'RIBA Procedures for the Validation of UK Courses and Examinations in Architecture,' published July 2003, effective from September 2003 and 'Tomorrow's Architect,' published March 2003, effective from September 2003, For more information see [www.architecture.com](http://www.architecture.com).

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#### **4. Recommendations of the Visiting Board Confirmed by the Royal Institute of British Architects Education Committee on 29 November 2006**

4.1 At its meeting on 29 November 2006, the RIBA Education Committee confirmed:

**Continued Validation of:**

**BA (Hons) Architecture** Part One  
3 years full time

**Graduate Diploma in Architecture** Part Two  
2 years full time, or 3 years part-time.

4.2 The next Visiting Board should take place in 2010.

#### **5. Recommendation of the Visiting Board to the Commonwealth Association of Architects and the Construction Industry Council & EU Directive**

5.1 The Visiting Board recommends to the Commonwealth Association of Architects that the CAA continue with their accreditation of the Part Two qualification.

5.2 The Visiting Board was satisfied that the Part One courses met the Construction Industry Council Common Learning Outcomes for Degree Courses in the Built Environment

5.3 The Visiting Board recommends to ARB that the Part 1 & 2 courses met all points of the EU Directive.

#### **6. Criteria for Validation**

6.1 On the basis of the sample of academic portfolios examined, the Visiting Board was satisfied that all the students graduating from the courses and examinations listed in 4.1 above satisfied all the Criteria for Validation (which are held in common by the RIBA for validation and the ARB for prescription).

#### **7. Standards**

7.1 On the basis of the sample of academic portfolios examined, the work from previous year of the courses listed in 4.1 was inspected during the visit and was found to meet the required standards.

#### **8. Conditions of Validation**

8.1 There were no conditions attached to the courses listed in 4.1.

#### **9. Standard Requirements of Recognition**

9.1 RIBA recognition of all courses/qualifications is dependent upon:

- i. external examiners being appointed for the course;
- ii. any significant changes to the courses and examinations being submitted to the RIBA;
- iii. any change of award title, and the effective date of the change, being reported to the RIBA so that, where appropriate, recognition may formally be transferred to the new title by the RIBA;

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- iv. submission to the RIBA of the names of students passing the courses/qualifications listed in 4.

College and the School of Architecture every success in achieving it.

## 10. Summary of the Recommendations, Advice & Commentary Contained in the Full Report

- 10.1 At the time of the visit, the School had just emerged from a difficult period. In summer 2005 the then Head of School and a significant proportion of staff left to set up a new school of architecture at a neighbouring institution. The University College took immediate steps to ensure that teaching was covered for the remainder of the academic session. A new Head of School was appointed and the institution undertook a recruitment exercise for permanent staff. The Board commended all connected with the School particularly the Head and his new staff for the energy and optimism they had displayed in responding to the challenge presented.

The dedication of the staff is matched by the enthusiasm of the students. The Board was also impressed by the belief in the importance of architecture within the University College and the commitment to its future, expressed by the Rector in her meeting with the Board and demonstrated actively through the Institution's allocation of additional resources to support it while it re-establishes itself.

The University College's mission statement is to 'Excel as a university for the arts which fosters creativity through local connections and global aspirations.' The Board considered this to be admirable and wishes the University

- 10.2 The School's strengths and distinctive aspects include:

- The staff's successful achievement of the first year's operation under an entirely new administration in exceptionally difficult circumstances.
- Good management at headship level
- Tremendous institutional support
- An excellent first year, both in terms of its structure and student work produced.
- The organisation of the second and third years of the BA (Hons) course is exceptional
- Excellent staff:student relationships, particularly in the BA (Hons) course
- The approach to technology, which is a potential strength
- The School's location in a College of Art, providing tremendous scope for collaborative working and cross-fertilisation of ideas
- The structure of the final diploma year, in which the major design project is finished before the end of the year, enabling students to undertake a research component in areas such as furniture design, as the final component of their course.
- IT provision, both current and planned, particularly software
- The workshop provision.

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### 10.3 **Recommendations**

- 10.3.1 The Visiting Board has made the following recommendations. The RIBA expects the Institution to report on action taken or planned as a result of the recommendations in the annual monitoring returns submitted by the school and in the mid term review. Failure by an Institution to act on recommendations may result in a course being conditioned by a future Visiting Board.
- 10.3.2 The Board recommends that the School review the content, delivery and assessment of the Management, Practice and Law element of the Graduate Diploma in Architecture (Part Two). Whilst being satisfied that minimum standards are being met, the Board would encourage a thorough re-examination of this part of the course.
- 10.3.3 The Board commends the University College for the investment it has provided to support the redevelopment of the School by its new Head and staff team. The Board, however, recommends that the planned longer-term investment by the University College in the premises and facilities of the School goes ahead. The focus should be on the renovation of existing facilities encouraging the growing use of studios and developing in concrete terms the use of facilities across the faculty. In particular, the Board recommends that the School further enhance studio facilities in order to maintain academic standards.
- 10.3.4 The Board supports the plans for a materials library and media library. The Board is very encouraged about the proposed establishment of the media resource centre and

would recommend sustained investment in order that this area of research and teaching be enhanced.

### 10.4 **Advice**

- 10.4.1 The Visiting Board offers the following advice to the Institution on desirable, but not essential improvements, which it is felt would assist course development and/or raise standards;
- 10.4.2 The Board supports and encourages the School's efforts in nurturing the emergent studio culture.
- 10.4.3 The Board advises the institution to ensure that student/staff ratios and other resources are maintained at an appropriate level as student numbers grow.
- 10.4.4 The Board advises the School to investigate ways in which the planned MA programmes might engage with and reinforce links with the design element of the validated programmes.
- 10.4.5 The Board noted that overseas students who are not native English speakers would appreciate more help with essays and dissertations, although students acknowledged this is already improving. The Board advises the School to monitor this.
- 10.4.6 The Board believes that the student experience would benefit from the debate that would ensue from expanded numbers at Part Two and supports the School's ambition in this area.

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10.4.7 The Board applauds the plans to establish a Part Three course, the benefits of which will filter through the School through greater connections with practice.

10.4.8 The Board looks forward to the development of the innovative course structure and its potential links with areas of design research.

## 11. Summary of Previous Visiting Board Reports

11.1 The last full Visiting Board to the Canterbury School of Architecture took place on 14 and 15 February 2002. The Visiting Board recommended that:

a. Continued Validation be given to:  
Part Two: University of Kent at Canterbury\* two years, full-time, Bachelor of Architecture with Honours

b. Conditional Continued Validation is given to:  
Part One: The University of Kent at Canterbury\*, Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Architecture (Part One)

The condition attached to the Part One course was that a sub-group (3 members) should return to the School following the graduation of the next cohort, i.e., in June 2002) to review the portfolios and reassure itself that all the component parts, leading to the recognised Part One qualification, were of an adequate standard.

\*The course was delivered by the Canterbury School of Architecture at the Kent Institute of Art and Design (KIAD). However, as KIAD did not have degree awarding

powers, the awards were validated by the University of Kent at Canterbury.

### 11.2 Summary of February 2002 Report

“The School’s strengths included a highly committed and supportive staff and a enthusiastic student body. The School enjoys the benefits of being part of an Art and Design school and was in the process renewing and strengthening its links with the School of Fine Art. Students benefit from some excellent facilities within the Institute.

“The Board had concerns regarding the standards achieved at the threshold standard of the BA (Hons) Architecture course. The Board recognised that this was largely symptomatic of the mechanisms under which the core elements of the course were assessed. The Visiting Board was reassured at the time of the visit that this issue would be dealt with and that the School would be working to resolve this matter immediately. However, in order to ensure that students were passing each of the core elements contributing to the recognised Part One award, and that consequently the lowest pass standards were appropriate, the Visiting Board recommended that a sub-group should return to the School following the graduation of the of the next cohort to monitor this. Despite these concerns, the Board found that the course had several strengths which included the integration of the design and non-design subjects, the improved use of the local context as a setting for design projects and the development of links with the School of Fine Art. The Board found that the area of Environmental Design, Construction and Architectural Technologies was dealt with appropriately, but recommends that the School may

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wish to develop its coverage of sustainable design in the future.

“The Board found that the Bachelor of Architecture with Honours (Part Two) course met the Criteria for Validation. As with the Part One course the Board found evidence of the integration of the non design subjects with the design work and commended this area. The Board found that students were required to produce journals which tracked the development of their design ideas. The Board supported this innovative initiative. The Board noted that students are required to undertake a research project in the final semester of their Part Two course. Whilst the Board commended this area and the good standard of work that it promoted, it was recommended that the School should take care to ensure that this element does not become too detached from the rest of the course.”

#### Summary of June 2002 Revisiting Board Report

- 11.3 The revisit took place on 25 June 2002. The Revisiting Board recommended Continued Validation of:

Part One: BA (Hons) Architecture (three years, full-time)

“The Board was pleased to find that the School had taken immediate and direct action to ensure that the concerns were addressed in the existing course and that some significant changes to the assessment mechanisms for the Part One course had taken place as a result of the recommendations of the February 2002 Visiting Board. The Board noted that in the School would be introducing a revised course in September 2003 which included

permanent changes to its supporting regulations. The Board was satisfied that the School had put in place mechanisms to ensure that all students undertaking the BA (Hons) Architecture course were required to pass all of the core areas of the Criteria for Validation. Through its examination of the portfolios, the Board was reassured and had confidence that the lowest pass standards were being drawn at an appropriate level. As a result the Board recommended that the next full visit to examine the Part One course should take place in 2006/7, in line with the next quinquennial visit.”

## 12. Details of the Conditions in Item 8.

- 12.1 There were no conditions attached to the courses listed in 4.1.

## 13. Commentary

- 13.1 **Self-Appraisal and Developments since the last visit**  
The Canterbury School of Architecture was formerly part of the Kent Institute of Art and Design (KIAD). As KIAD did not have its own degree awarding powers, its degrees were validated and awarded by the University of Kent. In 2005 KIAD merged with the Surrey Institute of Art and Design (SIAD) University College to form the University College for the Creative Arts at Canterbury, Epsom, Farnham, Maidstone and Rochester. The University College aims to acquire university title by August 2007. The University College has taught degree awarding powers and already may award its own degrees.  
Under the run out of the accreditation relationship with the University of Kent, for student enrolled prior to September 2005, degrees continue to be awarded by the University.

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From 2008 the awarding body will be the University College for the Creative Arts at Canterbury, Epsom, Farnham, Maidstone and Rochester. The name of 'Canterbury School of Architecture' was retained under a special dispensation in the new structure. The Quality Assurance procedures of SIAD and KIAD are being harmonised.

In summer 2005 the Head of School and a significant proportion of the staff left to set up a new school of architecture at another institution. The University College took immediate steps to ensure that teaching was covered for the remainder of the academic session. A new Head of School was appointed in August 2005 and over the summer the institution undertook a recruitment exercise for permanent staff.

The Acting Chief Executive (former Director of Quality Assurance at KIAD) met the RIBA Acting Head of Validation and the RIBA New Courses and Course Changes Group (NCCCG - a sub-committee of the RIBA Validation Committee) September 2005 to discuss how the School was responding to both the merger and the staffing situation, with particular regard to the welfare of students. The RIBA considered that the School was meeting these challenges in a positive way.

At the time of the 2006 Visiting Board, the School had a full complement of staff (apart from one technician post remaining to be filled). The Board held a very positive meeting with the Rector of the University College, who assured them of the Institution's commitment to architecture and measures that had been taken to strengthen its foundations and enable it to flourish in the future.

The Institution sees architecture as a vital part of its portfolio of courses and an integral part of its aspiration for full University status. Changes have been made to resourcing, communication, budgets and finance to ensure the future of the school. To serve its immediate needs, special funding has been provided for the next two years. By the end of the two-year period it is confidently expected that the School will be sustainable. The Institution reported that recent events have proved a formative experience and have been used as an opportunity to review activities and consider how the University College can build on its uniqueness and its status as a Small Specialist Institution. Its ethos is to celebrate experimentation and innovation, with the aspiration to challenge orthodoxies. The Institution sees its staff working in context, forming connections with other practitioners and creative people. It also wishes to take a collaborative approach towards other institutions in the city.

The Critical Self-Appraisal was similarly candid. Staff and students were consulted in the drafting of the document. The Critical Self-Appraisal considered the School's present position, offering a frank analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and its ambitions for regeneration and plans for the future.

Future major developments include the establishment of a graduate school, strengthening and expanding the Graduate Diploma, and offering specialist MA programmes. However, it is anticipated that developments at MA level will have a beneficial effect and support and strengthen the Part Two course delivery. The School also intends to develop a Part Three programme to complete the suite of professional architecture courses on offer.

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### 13.2 Documentation and Arrangements for the Visit

The Board would like to thank the staff and students of the Canterbury School of Architecture for their hospitality during the visit. The Board is particularly grateful to the administrative staff who worked hard to support the Board during the visit.

The documentation was very good and forwarded to the Board in a timely manner. The arrangements were mostly excellent; for the student meeting the Board would have preferred a more flexible space than a lecture theatre, but understood that this is not always possible for such large gatherings.

All staff were welcoming and helpful, and willingly sought additional information to help the Board in its deliberations. Portfolios were clearly labelled, although some more detailed identification of group work would have been useful. The Exhibition was professionally assembled and clearly explained. At Part Two, the Board welcomed the verbal presentations by students that supplemented and clarified the documentation.

#### 13.2.1 *Record of Academic Portfolios sampled during the visit*

The Board considered:

##### a. BA (Hons) Architecture Part 1

Year 1: 3 lowest passes  
2 middle passes  
2 high passes from a cohort of 52.

Year 2: 3 lowest passes  
2 middle passes  
2 high passes from a cohort of 55.

Year 3: 3 lowest passes  
2 middle passes  
2 high passes from a cohort of 37.

##### b. Graduate Diploma in Architecture (Part Two)

Year 4: 1 low (from the full-time route)  
5 middle (3 part-time, 2 full time)

These 6 portfolios represented all passes from an initial cohort of 13.

Year 5: 3 lowest passes  
2 middle passes  
2 high passes from a cohort of 16.

As there is no difference in content and assessment between the full time and part time routes at Part Two, the Board reviewed full-time and part-time students' portfolios together.

### 13.3 Responses made to the previous Visiting Board report (and to reports of any revisits) and external examiner comments.

In the documentation prepared for the Visiting Board, the present staff described how the School had responded to previous Visiting Board reports as far as could be determined from documentary evidence.

However, in the light of recent events, neither the 2006 Board nor the present complement of staff was in a position to judge fully how the School had responded to the comments of the 2002 Board. The condition attached

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to the Part One course in February 2002 had been satisfactorily discharged.

Clear mechanisms are in place for the submission and consideration of External Examiners' reports. External Examiners also receive a response to their reports from the Institution. The External Examiners confirmed that the School did take action on issues raised.

13.4 **Context of the courses within the wider provision of the school and Faculty.**

The Canterbury School of Architecture is located within the Canterbury campus of the University College for the Creative Arts at Canterbury, Epsom, Farnham, Maidstone & Rochester.

In addition to the validated Part One and Part Two architecture degrees, the Canterbury campus offers a BTEC Diploma in Foundation Studies, a BTEC National Diploma in Art & Design, an Access Course in Fine Art, undergraduate degrees in Interior Design, Interior Architecture and Fine Art. At postgraduate level the College offers MA degrees in Fine Art, Fine Art – International Practice and MA Spatial Practices: Art, Architecture, and Performance (in collaboration with Fine Art), the last of which is a recent addition to the portfolio. Further MA programmes are being planned in Urban Design and 'Virtual Space'.

The School is developing links with Fine Art, not only informally through the use of its specialist workshops but also formally through shared lectures. The fulfilment of these ambitions depends to some extent on the availability of staff and funding. First year students have already shared some activities with Fine Arts students on an

overseas trip. Beyond it simply being a question of using each others' facilities, the staff are eager to encourage the emerging discourse between students enrolled on different disciplines. A joint Stage One symposium for all First Year students is organised; staff would like to arrange similar events for Stages Two and Three but this is slightly more difficult. Staff also make use of personal connections in other disciplines.

13.5 **Detailed Commentary on the Course leading to Part One qualification**

13.5.1 Clarity, validity and achievement of course objectives  
The overall aims, educational aims and learning outcomes for the BA (Hons) Architecture course were set out clearly in the Course Guide and Unit Descriptors. The new staff body inherited an existing course which they continued to teach. Some degree of revision to project briefs was made but strictly within the existing unit descriptors, with the new staff bringing their own perspectives and liberal interpretations to bear. The Board believes the School was correct in this approach and that results have been successful. The Board looks forward to the future development of the courses as the staff team settles in.

13.5.2 Course design and content  
The BA (Hons) Architecture operates on a year-based structure. There is a combined first year with Interior Architecture and Interior Design, which allows students to explore projects from their chosen discipline's perspective and to have the potential to transfer from one programme to another at the end of the first year. The School intends to retain this element of the course as it has proved fruitful. The RIBA/ARB criteria are mapped across the second and third year and in all units, the aim being to

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cumulatively deliver a wider approach to the student. The Board considered that the teaching across a horizontal year structure appears to work well, particularly with the present student numbers.

13.5.3 Quality and coverage of the syllabus (including balance and integration between design/non-design work)

- *Design*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Board was satisfied that all the Part One Validation Criteria in the area of Design were being met by all graduates from the BA (Hons) Architecture programme.

The Board considered that Year One was exemplary. It found the holistic approach to the integration of technology into design particularly valuable. The Board considered that the size, pace and level of sophistication of the projects was appropriate. The Board would have liked to see more evidence of process models and suggests that students in later years should be encouraged to retain photographs as the First Years are doing.

- *Technology & Environment*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Board was satisfied that all the Part One Validation Criteria in the area of Technology and Environment were being met by all graduates from the BA (Hons) Architecture programme.

As noted above, the School takes a holistic approach to the integration of technology into design, particularly in the first year. The Board looks forward to these approaches positively influencing the second and third years as the new staff body settles down and the courses

evolve. The Board would welcome further development of sustainable technologies integrated into design.

- *Cultural Context*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Board was satisfied that all the Part One Validation Criteria in the area of Cultural Context were being met by all graduates from the BA (Hons) Architecture programme.

The Board applauded the use of Canterbury and Kent in exploring cultural context. Projects are focussed on appropriately complex and challenging sites. The School's location makes trips to other European cities relatively easy and inexpensive.

The Board supported the approach to integrate the teaching of cultural context as a part of the studio programme. The lecture courses relate appropriately to work in the studio. The Board noted that from the start of the 2006/2007 academic session, Architecture and Fine Art students will share a number of lectures and seminars in this subject area.

- *Communication*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Board was satisfied that all the Part One Validation Criteria in the area of Communication were being met by all graduates from the BA (Hons) Architecture programme.

Overall, graphic skills using all media were good. The Board was encouraged by the amount of hand-drawing done by the students, particularly in the first year. The School intentionally holds back on computer graphics in

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order to allow students to develop hand-drawing skills. The School also runs courses on life-drawing. The Board considered this early emphasis might be developed as a tool in later years in parallel with other media. Architecture students are continuing to use the wide range of art and design facilities available on site. The Board noted that from the 2006/2007 academic session investigations in various Fine Art media will be embedded in project briefs.

The School supplies a good deal of relevant software. The individual in charge of this has impressive knowledge of the uses and relevance of current and developing technology and trends in the workplace. This has led to the School investing in programmes that are appropriate to the task in hand and which will equip the students well. This is ably supported by excellent computer technicians on the staff.

- *Management Practice & Law*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Board was satisfied that all the Part One Validation Criteria in the area of Management, Practice and Law were being met by all graduates from the BA (Hons) Architecture programme.

This is chiefly addressed in the Third Year and is described in the following paragraph.

The Board was encouraged by evidence that attention is being given to developing this area of the programme.

- *Preparation for Professional Experience, (Part 1 only)*

Initial preparation for the Year Out starts in the semester 5 (Year 3) with the Management, Law and Practice

component of the 'Profession and Client Unit'. This is chiefly lecture based and assessed by written examination. External professionals contribute to the unit where appropriate. In semester six, students are given individual tutorials with the Professional Studies Adviser to discuss and develop CVs and job applications. Further counselling regarding working abroad, portfolio presentation and job interviews is given if required. At the end of the third year the School holds a plenary session and issues handouts regarding PEDR submissions, Health and Safety issues and the requirements and purpose of the Year Out. Although the 2004/2005 year out students had experienced some problems in the transition, present third year and year-out students were impressed with the support they received from the School in their efforts to find year-out employment.

#### 13.5.4 Progression within the course

The University College's quality assurance procedures require the School and the College Quality & Standards Committee to monitor progression and completion statistics assiduously. The College and the Quality & Standards Department provided a detailed written commentary for the Board. The numbers for 2004/2005 and 2005/2006 are undoubtedly affected by the upheaval in the previous academic year. The School would investigate any unusual patterns as a matter of course.

The Board requested further information on student progression and retention and the reasons behind it, which was supplied. The Board concluded that overall progression rates were in line with national trends.

The course is structured appropriately to allow students to achieve Part One.

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- 13.5.5 Assessment: methods, content and coverage, relative weightings, standards achieved (commenting separately on examinations, course work, dissertations, design projects as appropriate),

Assessment methods are clearly described along with learning outcomes in the Unit Descriptors. These also give the various weightings for particular activities or criteria within the unit in question. Work is assessed through a combination of portfolio reviews, essays, crits (formative interim crits and Final Reviews) or written examination, as appropriate to the task given. There is ongoing monitoring of written coursework and design projects in tutorial sessions.

The overall pass mark is 42% and no compensation is permitted. Students who fail are permitted to submit additional work for reassessment under the course and institutional assessment regulations, but the pass mark is capped at 40%

- 13.5.6 Admissions and arrangements for direct entry at a stage other than the start of the course

The School aims to admit 40 students to the first year of Part One each year. Entry requirements have recently been revised to take effect from recruitment of the 2007/2008 incoming cohorts. UCAS tariff points have been raised to 260 (from 160). A mix of science/math and humanities/arts subjects is preferred. All students are interviewed with portfolio. The School is happy to consider applicants from other routes of entry, such as suitable BTEC qualifications or Foundation Diplomas in Art and Design. Mature students presenting a portfolio

and relevant experience may also apply. Direct entrants to Year 2 of the BA (Hons) are accepted. Students may transfer into Year 3, but such students must usually have successfully passed the previous year in a School of Architecture. Exceptionally, students may be admitted from related disciplines via the University College's APEL/APL procedures.

The Board recognises the benefits to the School of increasing the UCAS points scores of its Part One recruits. The Board hopes this can be achieved without jeopardising the School's traditional commitment to widening access for students from non-traditional backgrounds. The School has communicated its commitment to widening access in the context of improving academic standards and progression rates within the School and have assured the Board that careful watch will be kept over this through various quality and standards processes, including the Annual Course Monitoring process.

### **13.6 Detailed Commentary on the Course leading to Part Two qualification**

- 13.6.1 Clarity, validity and achievement of course objectives  
The overall aims, educational aims and learning outcomes for the Graduate Diploma in Architecture were set out clearly in the Course Guide and Unit Descriptors. They were seen to be appropriate and were being achieved.

The programme was clearly mapped against the Part Two criteria.

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### 13.6.2 Course design and content

The Board welcomed the part-time route at Part Two, which enables students to follow the programme over three years (sometimes four if appropriate), which makes it more accessible to a wider group of students.

The structure of the Graduate Diploma is distinctive in that the Comprehensive Design Project is not the final unit, as students go on to complete a Research Project at the end of their final year. The research project may cover any area of interest to the individual student (although it must be agreed with the course director). This may or may not relate to the Comprehensive Design Project and indeed can be undertaken in collaboration with other areas of the University College such as furniture design. Through this, the School wishes to explore the way students perceive the relationship between research, practice and design. This is commended as an example of good practice.

### 13.6.3 Quality and coverage of the syllabus (including balance and integration between design/non-design work)

#### - *Design*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Board was satisfied that all the Part Two Validation Criteria in the area of Design were being met by all graduates from the Graduate Diploma in Architecture programme.

Students undertake a Comprehensive Design Project in two phases (first and second year). The Board considered that design outcomes were adequate.

The Board encourages the School to investigate ways in which the planned MA programmes might engage with and reinforce links with the design element of the validated programmes.

#### - *Technology & Environment*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Board was satisfied that all the Part Two Validation Criteria in the area of Technology and Environment were being met by all graduates from the Graduate Diploma in Architecture programme.

Staff had identified a lack of confidence in Part Two students when dealing with technology, which they have tried to tackle by encouraging them to use technology as a driving force, thinking about process as well as results and assessing them for both. The Board considered that technology and environment was adequately dealt with. The Board was encouraged that steps had been taken to innovate in this area. The Board would encourage further exploration of structure.

#### - *Cultural Context*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Board was satisfied that all the Part Two Validation Criteria in the area of Cultural Context were being met by all graduates from the Graduate Diploma in Architecture programme.

The Board found that consideration of cultural context was adequate. The School recognises that this is an area that needs strengthening at both Part One and Part Two, and will be ~~has~~ bidding for institutional funding for an additional staff member with expertise in this area. The Board was pleased to see that the new staff team is

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broadening cultural context and critical thinking at this level.

- *Communication*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Board was satisfied that all the Part Two Validation Criteria in the area of Communication were being met by all graduates from the Graduate Diploma in Architecture programme.

The External Examiners reported that students displayed strong verbal communication skills. In their meeting with the Board the students were highly articulate. The Board looks forward to the development of visual communications which will grow from the establishment of the digital media resource centre.

- *Management Practice & Law*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Board was satisfied that all the Part Two Validation Criteria in the area of Management, Practice and Law were being met by all graduates from the Graduate Diploma in Architecture programme.

This is delivered in a dedicated unit and assessed by a conventional examination; students who are referred are given a second chance by sitting an open book examination in lieu of coursework. The School acknowledged that this had been a particularly difficult area for the students, which they are determined to address. As stated under Part One, the Professional Studies Adviser has been gradually making contact with practices during the last year and now has the funds to visit all Part One 'year out' students in practice. This

should ultimately help to strengthen this part of the Part Two programme.

The School is committed to Management, Practice and Law and intends to establish a Part Three course that will be relevant to the local area. This could be mutually beneficial in several ways, encouraging alumni to become sessional staff at the school and providing CPD for local practitioners. The Board applauds the plan to establish a Part Three, the benefits of which will filter through the School through greater connections with practice.

The Board recommends that the School review the content, delivery and assessment of the Management, Practice and Law element of the Graduate Diploma in Architecture (Part Two). Whilst being satisfied that minimum standards are being met, the Board would encourage a thorough re-examination of this part of the course.

13.6.4 Progression within the course

Progression and retention was undoubtedly affected by events at the School. Several students interrupted their studies for this session. Nevertheless, all students who presented for final assessment in the 2005/2006 cohort were successful.

13.6.5 Assessment: methods, content and coverage, relative weightings, standards achieved

The Board found an appropriate range of assessment methods at Part Two. However, as stated earlier, the Board recommends a review of the assessment of Management, Practice and Law at this level. As at Part One, the pass mark is 42%. Retrievals of failure are

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capped at 40% and no compensation is permitted. Deferment of submission of the research project was granted to final year students who requested it, due to earlier events at the School. In accordance with University College regulations, marks awarded for the research project were not capped.

Students at the School have relied to an extent on log books to chart compliance and progress, which the School is now trying to develop into dynamic tools of recording a process rather than solely being evidence of criteria compliance. It has remained prescriptive to an extent to help students to cope with the transition, but in time the School intends to develop the students' understanding of Personal Development Plan activities using portfolios and sketchbooks in a Progress File.

#### 13.6.6 Admissions and arrangements for direct entry at a stage other than the start of the course

The target intake to the first year of Part Two is presently 16, although the School has plans to expand this. Applicants must have a recognised Part One qualification, preferably at 2.2 level or higher. They must present a portfolio showing creative ability and ideally have experience in practice. The School does not encourage direct entry into the later stages of Part Two, although this may exceptionally be granted depending upon the merits of individual cases.

The Board believes that the student experience would benefit from the debate that would ensue from expanded numbers at Part Two and supports the School's ambition in this area.

### 13.7 External examining arrangements

The Board met three current and recent External Examiners, one of whom has recently finished his period of service, and his successor.

There are three active External Examiners at any time, responsible for both Part One and Part Two. Prior to September 2005 external examining appointments were approved by the University of Kent, but as students enrolled from September 2005 will receive the University College's own awards, appointments are now approved through the University College's own procedures. The External Examiners' primary role is 'to assure the standards of provision and awards and to ensure that the assessment process is robust, carried out fairly and in accordance with the regulations' (University College's QA Handbook). There are clear processes for the submission of External Examiners' reports to the Academic Board, their consideration by the Institution and responses to the Externals with regard to issues raised.

At Canterbury, all third and fifth year students must present their final Comprehensive Design Project to the External Examiners. Fifth years must additionally present their Research Project. The Externals may also look at the work of first, second and fourth year students whose progress is of concern. External Examiners may make recommendations for the moderation of student marks but final decisions are made by the Progression and Award Board. Students may submit supplementary information between the internal assessment and the External Examiners' visit.

External Examiners are required to sign a declaration confirming that all criteria had been met. When examining

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the present cohorts, the Externals were confident that this was the case and that threshold standards were sound. The External Examiners have provided valuable continuity of familiarity with the courses and the standards achieved at Canterbury for the new team. The Examiners were invited to the School in February 2006 for an advisory interim visit.

Their approval was sought for the special arrangements made for graduating Diploma students who requested additional time to work on their research projects over the summer of 2006. Due to the exceptional circumstances at the School in the spring and summer of 2005, some students felt that they were not able to establish and develop their projects to the extent they would have wished and requested a deferment until September. The School, in consultation with the College's 'Quality & Standards Department' and the Chair of Academic Policy, Quality & Standards Committee, wished to ensure that these students were treated fairly without standards being compromised. These deferments were granted to the graduating cohort by the Progression and Award Board with the approval of the External Examiners, who considered it an appropriate resolution to a one-off situation. All students who submitted in September were successful. The External Examiners commented that despite the interruption the fifth years had suffered and the fact that the incoming staff had not yet developed a specific position, some very interesting ideas had been presented.

In their general discussion with the Board, the External Examiners commented that:

- They were very impressed by the way in which the institution had supported the School of Architecture, and particularly complimented the new Head of School on his achievement.
- The Externals believe that the seeds of future development have been sown and that the School is in a good position to achieve all its aspirations.
- One of the most interesting aspects of the School is its location in a school of art and design with its possibilities for cross-collaboration with Fine Art, not necessarily on a formal footing. This has great potential for giving an identity to the School.
- The incoming staff's decision to continue to teach the existing course rather than impose radical change immediately was laudable.
- The Externals believe that positive changes are happening at Diploma level.
- The structure of the final diploma year, in which the major design project is finished before the end of the year, allows students to produce much more open, speculative and interesting projects. The Externals believed students benefit enormously and it encourages interdisciplinarity.
- Management, Practice and Law at Diploma level could be improved as it appeared to be somewhat 'checklist'. At BA level there were more interactive teaching systems. The External Examiners believe this area of the course is in a period of transition.
- The Externals were confident about appropriate coverage of technology in both programmes. Technology experts have been added to the staff and the School also uses consultants to strengthen this area. In their opinion it is presently stronger at BA level than in the Diploma, although the signs are encouraging. The first year of the BA programme had

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posed intelligent questions regarding sustainability, which the Externals believed promised very well, and they were encouraged also by what is happening in the second year. The new team is finding innovative ways of transferring technology to the design studio. The Externals mentioned particularly the Diploma students investigation of new light technology. Some interesting work on investigating materials and materials science had been produced.

- The Externals had been critical of the major project in the third year, in which they found some looseness of definition. However, they had found that there were still some very inventive propositions for buildings, raising issues which prompted interesting and intelligent discussion in the School.
- The level of history and theory in the portfolios was acceptable, although this could be developed. The relative looseness of the project in the third year had been seized as an opportunity by some students to develop it according to their own interests.
- The External Examiners did not have any particular observations to make on student progression and retention as their remit concerns the third and fifth year; however, they did believe that the decision to raise entry requirements may be significant.
- When presenting their work to the External Examiners, both third and fifth year students took a very professional and confident approach, being knowledgeable, articulate and open to criticism. In particular the Examiners noted ‘fantastic’ enthusiasm in the third year.

The Board commented that the School should be mindful of growing student numbers when considering its External Examining arrangements. As numbers grow it may no

longer be practical or desirable to ask Examiners to examine both Part One and Part Two.

### **13.8 Arrangements for Monitoring Professional Experience**

There is a designated Professional Studies Adviser (PSA) who has been gradually establishing contacts with practices during the year. Year out students are required to maintain regular contact with the PSA and to send their PEDR sheets for review and signing at three monthly intervals. The Board was pleased to learn that the PSA had recently been awarded a grant that would allow her to visit students at their practices. This is clearly good practice. Furthermore, she has now been given the means to organise construction site visits.

### **13.9 Students;**

The Board was pleased to meet students from all five years of the academic programmes, and some ‘year out’ students, at a very well attended meeting. Students from both the full time and part time routes of the Diploma course were represented. The Board regretted that the meeting had to be held in a lecture theatre rather than a more flexible space, which would have engendered a more informal atmosphere; however a candid and open discussion did ensue.

Students spoke frankly of their experiences during the last year and how they felt that the School and Institution had responded. The Board was delighted by the overwhelming support of the School of Architecture by the students.

The students had been very anxious about the situation in which they had found themselves at the end of the 2004/2005 academic session and going into the

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2005/2006 session, but had been reassured by the actions of the new staff team and the institution as a whole. Students were involved in the process of change and reacted to problems. The Board was impressed that their opinions were sought in the staff recruitment exercises, attending presentations by the candidates. The students are clearly thoroughly engaged with the School and its future.

Students were attracted to the School because:

- Its location in Canterbury, including its geographical situation (proximity to mainland Europe) and the historical interest.
- Many students were attracted to the School initially by its close links with Fine Art, the possibilities for interdisciplinary working and lectures by artists and architects. The relationship between the School of Architecture and the School of Art gives it an added dimension and buzz.
- The opportunity to transfer between architecture, interior architecture and interior design.
- Opportunities to work across the year groups and other courses, in particular the second and third year joint project and the Management, Practice and Law group team games in which third and fifth years participated;
- The staff's honesty about the challenges the School faced and how they proposed to meet them convinced present and prospective students;
- Part One graduates had been impressed by the School's plans for the Part Two and the obvious enthusiasm of the teachers. On returning to the School or enrolling for the first time, students' expectations were generally surpassed.

- The new staff provided a fresh feel. The international background of the staff and the new mix of experience and qualifications provided really different precedent studies.
- The opportunity to do the Diploma part-time.
- The learning environment is good, particularly its diversity and creativity.
- The programmes are creative while, at the same time, addressing technical and practical aspects.
- Students found a more personal type of teaching relationship, which they considered true of the whole college, not just architecture. Staff are very approachable and students feel able to speak frankly. Students believed that staff acted above and beyond the call of duty, giving students as much time as they felt they needed.
- Mature students found that the extra study support was tremendous. Those who had been apprehensive about returning to academia were reassured.
- The close relationships do not mean any reduction in rigour, as students feel mentally challenged by the projects, crits and reviews.
- The Head of School makes time for students despite his own workload.
- Staff help to bring out the best in the students' work. The Part One programme leader was singled out for praise for meeting student representatives to find out what issues particularly concerned students and how the staff might help. Overall, contact between the student body and senior management is very good.
- Students had been impressed by the sessional staff brought in by the School, offering wide experience of practice and teaching in other schools. The contribution of technology experts was particularly

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- appreciated; some students reported that they had effectively received one to one tuition.
- There was enthusiastic support for the technical staff attached to the School.
  - Students are also helped by staff in other departments when wishing to use their facilities.
  - The staff are eager to help students into practice. The support in the third year was very good. During the year out staff remain helpful and available, giving students email addresses and phone numbers.
  - The layout of the building itself is attractive, as it encourages integration between all students across all levels. Students can see easily what is being produced, not only by architecture students but also by interior architecture and interior design students. They are actively encouraged to view each other's work and crits.
  - Support for part-time Part Two students is very good; staff are always available for consultation if necessary.
  - The programme encourages students to take part in external competitions. Students enjoy representing the school before an external audience.
  - The administrative support is excellent.
  - Resources are steadily improving. Students appreciated the greater variety of software packages which afforded them great freedom to experiment rather than feeling compelled to go in a certain direction.
  - The workshop is great and the staff are very helpful. Fine Art facilities had always theoretically been available to architecture students but in the last year this has become more of a practical reality.
  - Students thought the library was very good and appreciated the staff's willingness to obtain material that was not in the collection. Workstations are always available for those who wish to study there.

- Pastoral care is good, particularly the College's Student Services department. Students feel able to approach both academic and administrative staff about non-academic problems and receive the guidance they needed or to be directed to where they might seek help, as appropriate.

There are informal mechanisms to enlist student representation, students sometimes volunteering and sometimes being elected. The students reported that the BA programme leader wished to formalise the process but due to the pressures of the last year this has not yet been possible, although the intention remains. Students are members of, and can voice concerns to, various committees, and receive a response as to any action the School is able to take. However, some students did comment that they were not always aware of when these meetings were due to take place, hence the Board's advice to the School to make better use of internal systems to enable students to communicate their needs.

Improvements the students would like include:

- Accessibility out of hours is sometimes seen as a problem, but the School is trying to address this. Some students believed that the relatively restricted times made them learn to work in a more focussed way. Swipe cards are available but staff must be present because it is an open campus.
- Overseas students who are not native English speakers would appreciate more help with essays and dissertations, although this is already improving.
- Better organisation of printing at peak periods to alleviate jams. Students did not think that it was necessarily a question of more printers.

- The cost of materials can be expensive. Students would appreciate some provision of materials and reduced printing costs.
- Greater integration with Fine Art to enable students easier access to their facilities. Students must use Fine Art facilities if they wish to use the A1 scanner. Understandably Fine Art prioritises the needs of its own students.
- Extended library opening hours would be very helpful.
- Construction site visits would be appreciated. They would welcome the opportunity to follow a project through, accompanied by lectures. At Diploma level, some students believed there was an assumption that they had had more access to sites than was often the case. (The Board subsequently learned in the meeting with staff that construction site visits were being planned.)
- More emphasis on Management, Practice and Law

The Board noted the students' confidence in the present facilities and looks forward to the institution's sustained commitment to these.

At the time of the visit there were 174 students enrolled on the validated programmes, 145 at Part One, 29 full time Part Two and 8 part-time Part Two.

### **13.10 Staff**

The Board was pleased to meet representatives of all those who contribute to the architecture programmes at Canterbury, academic, technical and administrative, a very frank and informative meeting.

The Board was impressed at the School's achievement in forming a cohesive team from a group of individuals from a wide variety of countries and backgrounds.

In addition to the staff who were in post at the beginning of the 2005/2006 academic session, more staff were recruited during the year. All bring specific expertise with them, but in particular the Board noted the appointment of technology specialists and a model-making specialist. The School expects to be able to build on its present success with the new arrivals.

The new staff team were attracted to the School by the exciting opportunity presented by the challenges it faced. Its situation a college of art and design was also attractive, providing great possibilities for the integration of various complementary disciplines.

Staff had found the last year stressful but exciting, dealing with the challenges not only of getting to know new colleagues and a new institution, but also getting to grips with an existing course and developing it. It was also necessary to earn the trust of the students. The staff believed this was made easier by the students' positive attitudes and their thirst for learning. At the end of the academic session there was a very positive atmosphere in the school. Some staff who had come to assist initially for a short period were motivated to remain by the dynamism and prevailing spirit of optimism. The staff believe that they now have a solid foundation on which to build and are looking forward to a period of stability in which the School can consolidate its present position and move forward.

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In the next academic session the School plans to sharpen the focus of the course with a view to establishing a thematic identity for Canterbury. As a small specialist institution there may be opportunities to develop local expertise in the region which can be of benefit to the region. The School considers sessional staff an integral part of the team, spending one day per week in the studio and also participating in interim crits and final reviews. The School believes the employment of sessional staff is mutually beneficial for both school and local practices. Practitioners are welcome to attend the open lectures and there are also opportunities for sponsorship. The students ran their own lecture series, of which they are very proud and wish to continue and develop with the full backing of the Head of Architecture. In addition to established School links with practice, the present staff members also have connections from their previous places of work. The School intends to mix local, national and international staff to widen the debate, which it hopes will play a significant role in the School's development strategy for Part Two. The staff believe that the level of discussion in the studios has already risen. This is also the students' forum for contributing to curriculum development.

The Board commended the School's great achievement in assembling an almost entirely new staff team (academic, technical and support staff). The Board believed that the present individuals form an exceptional staff body. It was impressed by the high calibre of staff at all levels and across all spheres of work, academic, technical and administration, with excellent programme leaders. The staff enjoys exemplary leadership from the present Head of School. The international background of the staff contributes to the dialogue within the school. The Board hopes that the present team spirit prevails.

When sessional staff are taken into account, the present staff:student ratio is 1:17. The Board advises the institution to ensure that Staff:Student ratios and other resources are maintained at an appropriate level as student numbers grow.

### **13.11 Research**

The University College believes that in a small specialist institution, commitment to research is fundamental to excellent teaching. The institution considers itself 'research informed' rather than 'research led.' The structure of the recently merged University College is intentionally more amenable to research than its separate predecessors, with various mechanisms in place (research sabbatical systems, funding) to support staff in their research activities. It is now expected that staff will undertake research and use the specified amount of time allocated for this.

The emerging policy of the Institution is to recognise all forms of practice as research and it anticipates that practice-led research will be significant.

Research activity at the School is developing. During the 2005/2006 academic session teaching took priority. Although individuals may continue to pursue existing interests, the School recognises great opportunity for interesting research groupings, not just within architecture but also across related disciplines.

As stated previously, practice-based research will almost certainly form part of the School's activities. Research into education is another possibility. The School has recently introduced a new MA in Spatial Practices: Art, Architecture, and Performance in collaboration with Fine Art.

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The Board believes it will be interesting to see how research groupings will form and looks forward to seeing how this develops and ultimately influences the architecture courses.

### 13.12 **Equal Opportunities:**

There is a stated equal opportunities policy. The School keeps detailed records of entry qualifications of all students, the ethnic origins of students on all stages of the programmes and Declared Disability statistics. The present gender balance at Part One (2005/2006) is 60% male, 40% female which is an improvement on the previous year. This compares favourably with the national norm. The gender balance at Part Two (2005/2006) is 79% male, 21% female, which is on the low side on a national level. The majority of students describe themselves as White British/White Other.

The staff gender balance is good, and they represent a wide range of nationalities.

### 13.13 **Resourcing and facilities**

#### - *Studios*

The School is keen to foster a lively studio culture and has taken steps to encourage its development. This started with restoring their original functions studios which had been used primarily as seminar rooms.

The building contains studios for architecture, interior design and interior architecture students. First years share a combined studio on the ground floor of the building. Second and third year architecture students share a studio on the first floor, and second and third year Interior Design and Interior Architecture students share another

on the same floor. There is a dedicated shared studio for both years of the Graduate Diploma. It is evident that students enjoy and benefit from the proximity of the studios, not only of all years but also of other disciplines.

Students are now required to be in the studios at certain times and actively encouraged to be there, resulting in an increasingly vibrant atmosphere. The School is planning a wireless network and at the time of the visit hoped it would be installed by Christmas 2006. The studios are multi-functional, being used also for model-making, tutor groups and reviews.

There is also a large space in the entrance hall and wide landings which are used for exhibitions and crits. At the time of the visit the School buildings were open from 8am to 8pm (10pm in the summer). The School is examining the possibility of providing 24-hour access, but security is a consideration.

There is a schedule of accommodation improvement which was interrupted by the merger between KIAD and SIAD. A lift will be installed by the end of 2006/2007 academic year. Some refurbishment of the studios did take place to allow immediate occupation. Overall the Board believes that the School has the makings of first-rate studios but that further upgrading is needed.

The Board recommends sustained longer-term investment in the School by the College, for the renovation of existing facilities encouraging the growing use of studios and developing in concrete terms the use of facilities across the faculty. In particular, the Board recommends that the School further enhance studio facilities in order to maintain standards.

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- *Workshops*

There is a large main workshop, chiefly used for metal, wood and plastics. This is complemented by a welding room, casting area and lighting studio and darkroom for photography. The workshops are supported by full-time specialist instructors and qualified technicians. All students must be inducted before they may use certain equipment. The School also employs a specialist model-making tutor.

Students may also use Fine Art's facilities which include digital video facilities, printing, etching, lithographing, screen printing and so forth. Naturally at present Fine Art students receive priority, but the School is trying to establish a more formal arrangement that is tenable. The School plans to seek additional funding to provide discipline-specific facilities.

The Board supported the ongoing development of a materials library.

- *Library*

The College has an on-site library which serves the needs all programmes available at the Canterbury campus. As the campus is small the library is readily accessible to the School of Architecture.

The present collection (all subjects) numbers 40,000 books, 2000 videos/DVDs/audio items and approximately 150,000 slides. In term time the Library is open from 9.00am to 8.30pm Monday to Friday (with a later opening time of 10.00 on Tuesdays). There are shorter opening hours in the vacation.

The College Librarian is also the subject librarian for Interiors and Architecture. The Library takes a proactive approach to developing the collection, liaising closely with the architecture and interiors staff. The library receives all project briefs, catalogues are used widely and staff make recommendations. Architecture-related material is integrated into the collection as a whole rather than being in a dedicated section. The collection includes subjects related to architecture, such as building and construction, civil engineering, interior design and town planning.

The slide collection includes 45000 architecture images, with 300 being added in the last year alone. There is a dedicated slide curator. The slide collection is gradually being digitised as quickly and as extensively as funding and copyright considerations permit. The Library also subscribes to two slide schemes which allow staff and students to view images of current exhibitions.

New staff and first year students receive an induction to the Library and information retrieval. Second and third years participate in information skills workshops which are intended to develop research and dissertation skills with a view to helping them with projects and theses. Library staff are readily available to answer queries in person and via email.

Following the merger with the Surrey Institute of Art and Design, the College is discussing the harmonising of all systems, including financial ones. At present there is no subject-specific budget but this is being considered. Stock is purchased according to student numbers. The University College has spent about £100,000 on online services overall, subscribing to technical indexes, periodical indexes, art and design indexes and abstract and

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most recently Edina Digimap, which complements the Library's printed map collection. The Library also subscribes to over 180 print journals, some of which are also available electronically.

The computerised Library catalogue can be accessed from outside the Library. Students and staff may also reserve online and an interlibrary loan system is in operation.

Adjacent to the Library are two media resource centres equipped with Macs, adjacent to the Library. These are bookable and otherwise on open access. The Library also provides a PC centre with internet, scanning and word-processing facilities.

The Board liked the interdisciplinary nature of the Library and the personalised atmosphere of Library. The Board believed that the environment, construction and professional practice sections could be expanded.

The Board is very encouraged about the proposed establishment of the media resource centre and would encourage sustained investment in order that this area of research and teaching be enhanced.

- *IT*

The Board was encouraged by the current IT provision and plans for its development. It was particularly impressed by the approach taken by the member of staff responsible for IT and his extensive knowledge of the field. The Board also welcomed the School's initiative to introduce a wireless network.

The School considers the present provision to be adequate but in need of upgrading. Currently there are 50

workstations in the studios, 16 of which are Macs. There are also 5 printers and plotters, both colour and black and white and printing up to A0 size. The School is planning to bid for capital funding for further improvements. 16 new machines have recently been purchased. The Board learned from students that a proportion of electronically-stored work had been lost during the staff changeover. The Board anticipates that the School's plans for the development of IT provision include reliable back-up and retrieval systems.

The School is standardising the software packages available but in practice students may use whatever they like. The specialist software provided by the School includes 3D Studio Max, Maya, AutoCad, Vectorworks, The Adobe Creative Suite and Adobe Premier. Students also have access to the computing resources of other departments within the College allowing for more advanced printing on various materials. There is a suite of digital video processing and production computers, and students may also borrow digital still and video cameras.

- *DDA compliance*

The Board looks forward to the installation of a lift, toilets for disabled access, and compliant entry provision within the refurbishment work on the building to help the School meet its obligations under the DDA.

## 14. Conclusions

The Board congratulates the School of Architecture and the University College on their extraordinary achievements during the last year. The new Head of School has skilfully assembled a very accomplished team that appears to be working together well. The Board believed the Institution, School and its staff had demonstrated excellent crisis

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management. The incoming staff had to form, very quickly, working relationships with each other and with an existing body of students, understand and deliver an existing course and become accustomed to the workings of an institution at a time of great change. The positive outcome to the Visiting Board is a testimony to their efforts.

## 15. Documentation Provided

Record of the documentation provided before and during the visit.

Prior to the Visiting Board the School provided:

- Critical Self-Appraisal
- Questionnaire Responses & Supplementary information
- External Examiners' reports
- Course documents 2005/2006, Part One and Part Two (on CD),
- Unit Descriptors and Project Details 2005/2006 Part One and Part Two (on CD)

In the Base Room the School provided:

- Course Guide: BA(Hons) Architecture
- Course Guide: Graduate Diploma in Architecture
- All unit descriptors and project briefs for both programmes
- Marking records and year results from June 2006
- Progression and Awards board for both programmes.
- BA (Hons) Architecture UCAS profile
- University College for the Creative Arts Admissions Policy

- University College for the Creative Arts, Accreditation of Prior Learning Procedures and Forms APL1-APL4
- First Destination of UK Domiciled Men and Women Obtaining First Degrees in 2001-2002: Comparison of HESA National Statistics with KIAD
- First Destination of UK and EU Domiciled Men and Women Obtaining First Degrees in 2002-2003
- First Destination of UK Domiciled Men and Women Obtaining First Degrees in 2002-2003
- First Destination of UK and EU Domiciled Men and Women Obtaining First Degrees in 2003-2004
- First Destination of UK Domiciled Men and Women Obtaining First Degrees in 2003-2004
- Questionnaire Section 9 (Edited October 2006) Final
- 2006 Staff CVs
- University College Equality and Diversity Policy July 2006
- University College Race Equality Policy
- University College Race Equality Action Plan
- University College for the Creative Arts at Canterbury Access Audit Report November 2005
- Letter re: DDA Compliance and Minor Works Schedule 2006/07: Canterbury School of Architecture
- Commentary upon Equal opportunity and Diversity Statistics: Declared Disability and Ethnicity
- Draft Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy 2006-2010, University College for the Creative Arts
- Action Plan for TQEF allocations 2006-2009, University College for the Creative Arts
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy Action Plan, 2006-2009, University College for the Creative Arts
- University College Assessment Policy Handbook 2005/06
- Course Board of Study agenda and minutes 2005/06

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- College Board of Study agenda and minutes 2005/06
  - School Quality Action Plans 2005/06
  - BA(Hons) Interior Architecture: programme specification
  - MA Spatial Practices: programme specification
  - Canterbury College Research Action Plan 2005/06
  - University College for the Creative Arts Research Degrees Action Plan 2005/06
  - University College for the Creative Arts Research Capability Fund Research Strategy
  - College Research Committee: terms of reference
  - Learning Development Policy (Staff development)
  - Learning Development Information (Staff development)
  - Draft Continuous Professional Development Policy (Staff development)
  - 2006 Quality Assurance Handbook 2005/2006
  - Annual Course Monitoring Policy, Schedule and Course Monitoring Report Template 2006/2007
  - QAA Development Engagement in Architecture Report: January 2004
  - QAA Institutional Audit Report - The Surrey Institute of Art and Design, University College: May 2003
  - QAA Subject Review Report - Kent institute of Art and Design: December 1999
  - Assessment Policy Handbook 2005/2006
  - Common Undergraduate Credit and Unit Framework Definitive Document: September 2005
  - Common Undergraduate Credit Scheme: September 2006
  - University College Student Regulations Handbook 2005/2006 (First Year Students)
  - School Plans
  - Site and Building Plan Book
  - Library standing orders relating to Architecture/Interiors 2005/2006
  - Architecture and Interiors periodicals and current subscriptions
  - Journals indexed by art abstracts, Avery and Riba Library
  - First year student Inform Workshop Worksheet
  - Study Skills Guides
  - Second year student Dissertation Support Leaflet (with Study Skills Advisor and Library)
  - The Edina Digimap Service
  - Sample briefs illustrating the use of technology, media and communications subject group 2006-2007
  - Minutes of the College IT Users Group Canterbury: 4th October 2006
  - Minutes of the College IT Users Group Canterbury: 21st March 2006
  - Minutes of the College IT Users Group Canterbury: 16th May 2006
  - Media Resource Centre Equipment List
  - Management Report for Year Ending 31st July 2004
  - Management Report for Year Ending 31st July 2005
  - Management Report for Year Ending 31st July 2006
  - Management Report for Year Ending 31st July 2007
  - University College for the Creative Arts: Architecture Budget Allocation 2006-2007
  - University College for the Creative Arts: Resource Bids Canterbury 2006-2007
  - Prospectus
  - Timetables