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**Exploratory Board to Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design**  
BA (Hons) Arts, Design & Environment (Architecture Pathway), 3 years full time.

**28 June 2004**

**Exploratory Board Report: Recommendations Confirmed by the RIBA  
Education Committee at its meeting on 08 December 2004.**

### **Membership of the Exploratory Visiting Board**

Robert Felix (Chair of Board; Chair of RIBA New Courses and Course Changes Group)

Caroline Gould (VC of NCCCG)

Derek Cottrell (member of NCCCG)

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

Chris Ellis (Head of Validation, RIBA) attended the visit as an observer.

### **1. Introduction and Summary**

The Exploratory Board to Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design took place on 28 June 2004. The remit of the Board was to consider the BA (Hons) Arts, Design & Environment (Architecture Pathway) for Candidate Course for Validation status.

Central Saint Martins is a constituent college of the newly-designated University of the Arts, London (formerly The London Institute HEC). The University is fully supportive of the re-introduction of architecture at Central Saint Martins (it having previously been offered until the 1940s). In its current five-year plan (2002) the University identified the College as the focus for development of architecture at several levels; access, further education and higher education. The degree course is the first of these to be fully developed. Architecture thus forms an important part of the formal developmental strategy of the University, being closely allied with its research ambitions in the built environment and human habitation. It is also intended to bring greater scope to the spatial and artefact pathways.

The College began developmental discussions with the RIBA in 2002. At its meeting on 26 November 2003 the New Courses and Course Changes Groups reviewed the Proposal for Candidate Course Status of the BA Hons. Jonathan Barratt, Dean of the School of Graphic & Industrial Design and Bill Risebero, Course Director attended the NCCCG of 14 January 2004 to discuss the course in more detail with the Group.

### **2. Recommendations**

The Exploratory Board of 28 June 2004 recommended that the course be awarded Candidate Course for Validation status.

### **3. Definition**

Candidate Course for Validation status is recommended if the course content and structure is judged to have the potential to fulfil RIBA Criteria for Validation if implemented in the way anticipated. It is not equivalent to Validation, which can only be granted once the standards of the work produced have been assessed and found satisfactory. Schools may seek Validation for courses and examinations previously designated a 'Candidate Course for Validation' once the first cohort of students has completed the course. This is undertaken by an Initial Visiting Board. The first Initial Visiting Board to the BA (Hons) Arts, Design & Environment (Architecture Pathway) will take place in June 2006 at the earliest.

**4. General comments**

- a. The Board would like to thank the staff and students of Central Saint Martins for their hospitality and assistance during the Exploratory Board.
- b. The Board was impressed with the multidisciplinary and conceptual vision behind the Architecture Pathway. They believed that students with a more creative or artistic background would be attracted by its philosophy and content.
- c. The Board considered that the staff, students and facilities at Central Saint Martins are exemplary. Staff are enthusiastic and committed to the course, supportive of the team as a whole and of the students. The course receives the full backing of the University, which considers that architecture is an important component of its vision for the future. Further staff appointments are being made to ensure that the course is fully staffed.
- d. Library, workshop and studio facilities are very good. As with staff provision, facilities are under constant review to allow improvements where necessary.
- e. The students are highly articulate, enthusiastic and supportive of the course. They enjoy the multidisciplinary approach, the creative/artistic emphasis, the contact and exchange of ideas with students on the artefact and spatial pathways and the excellent support they receive from staff.
- f. The design projects are thorough and tackled well by the students. The technical journal was particularly noteworthy. The Board considered that Stage 1 was highly analytical and interpretive, but was confident that students will have the opportunity to meet the RIBA/ARB criteria fully over years 2 and 3.
- g. The Board looks forward to receiving detailed course documentation for Stages 2 and 3 as these are developed.
- h. The Board would like to undertake a monitoring visit in summer 2005 to review progress.