

Royal Institute of British Architects

**Report of the RIBA Visiting Board
to the Robert Gordon University,
Aberdeen**

Confirmed by RIBA Education Committee 30.11.05

**The Scott Sutherland School of Architecture
Faculty of Design and Technology**

BSc (Hons) Architecture Part One

**BSc (Hons) Architecture (European
Practice) Part One**

BSc (Hons) Interior Architecture Part One

MArch Architecture Part Two

PG Dip/MSc Architecture Part Two

1. Information About the Courses

1.1 Courses offered for revalidation:

BSc (Hons) Architecture Part One, 4 years full time
 BSc (Hons) Architecture (European Practice) Part One, 4 years full time
 BSc (Hons) Interior Architecture Part One, 4 years full time
 MArch Architecture Part Two, 1 year full time
 PG Dip/MSc Architecture Part Two, 1 year full time.

1.2 Address of the Institution where the courses are delivered

The Scott Sutherland School of Architecture
 Robert Gordon University
 Garthdee Road
 Aberdeen
 AB10 7QB
 T: + 44 (0) 1224 262728
 F: + 44 (0) 1224 262728
 W: www.rgu.ac.uk

1.2 Name of Awarding Body

The Robert Gordon University

Principal and Vice-Chancellor: Professor Mike Pittilo

1.3 Name of Head of School

Professor Mike Press

2. Membership of the Visiting Board

2.1 The members of the RIBA Visiting Board for the visit on 27 and 28 October 2005 were:

Professor George Henderson (Chair)
 Helena Webster (Vice Chair)
 Aaron Evans
 Gordon Murray (Regional Nominee)
 Eleanor McAllister (Non-Architect Member)
 Kevin Davis (Graduate/Student Member)

The Board was one member short due to illness. The Board continued as planned with the consent of the Head of School and the Chair of the Validation Committee. The Board remained quorate.

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

Ms Kirsty Campbell (Robert Gordon University) 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 the "RIBA Criteria for Validation", published March 2002, effective from September 2003. For further information, visit www.architecture.com.

4. Recommendations of the Visiting Board Confirmed by the Royal Institute of British Architects Education Committee 30 November 2005

4.1 The RIBA Education Committee at its meeting on 30 November confirmed:

Continued Validation of:

BSc (Hons) Architecture Part One, 4 years full time
 BSc (Hons) Architecture (European Practice) Part One, 4 years full time
 BSc (Hons) Interior Architecture Part One, 4 years full time

4.2 The Visiting Board recommended **Continued Validation with Conditions** of:

MArch Architecture Part Two, 1 year full time
 PG Dip/MSc Architecture Part Two, 1 year full time

4.3 The next full Visiting Board should take place in 2009.

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 subject to the satisfactory discharge of the conditions identified in section 8 below, the Part One & Part Two 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 and subject to the condition described in paragraph 8, the work from previous year of the courses listed in 4.1 and 4.2 was inspected during the visit and was found to meet the required standards.

8. Conditions of Validation

The Visiting Board recommends that the courses listed in 4.2 receive continued validation with conditions. The following conditions of recognition apply:

- i. A report defining mechanisms to ensure that all students graduating from the Part Two courses are meeting

all validation criteria (with regard particularly to the Technology & Environment criteria). This report is to be received at the RIBA by 16 December 2005.

ii. A revisit by a sub-group, consisting of three members plus Secretary and providing continuity with the present Board will take place to co-incide with the external examinations of the present academic year (2005/2006). The sub-group will ascertain whether the implemented mechanisms to be outlined in the report ensure that all Part Two graduates meet all Part Two validation criteria.

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;
- iv. submission to the RIBA of the names of students passing the courses/qualifications listed in 4.1 and 4.2.

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

10.1 The Scott Sutherland School is a well-established, highly regarded School of Architecture. The School is welcoming and friendly. Its excellent staff-student relations promote a close-knit and collaborative atmosphere. There is a definite buzz in the School which the Board believes is a barometer of a new energy and sense of purpose.

10.2 The School's strengths include:

- Its clear identity and individuality as the Scott Sutherland School of Architecture, one of the oldest Schools of Architecture in the United Kingdom, and which is a nationally and internationally recognised name.
- A palpable energy and excitement in the School which suggest great potential to be exploited. This is fostered by the new school leadership, which brings strong links with practice and the contribution of high-calibre guest speakers and lecturers.
- An excellent and committed staff body.
- The clarity of academic focus.
- Good rapport between staff and students. The students find the staff approachable; the relatively small size of the School fosters a friendly and collaborative atmosphere.
- A vibrant studio culture.
- A strong student-led lecture society.

- Excellent facilities at the Garthdee Campus. The projected refurbishment and new buildings, if carried out as planned, stand to create outstanding provision.
- Superb model-making expertise.
- The Interior Architecture Part One, is a unique selling point of the Scott Sutherland School, not only because it provides the potential to specialise to a degree at Part One level, but also because it attracts students to architecture who may not otherwise have considered it as a career.
- The potential for interdisciplinarity and cross-fertilisation with subject areas in Art and Design. Of note is the Gray's School of Art which is an established school of art, providing excellent facilities.
- Established links with Built Environment disciplines at the University, which Architecture staff are keen to preserve.
- Links with overseas schools.
- A clear commitment to Architecture from University Senior Management.
- Its location within the UK, described as a 'rich geographic laboratory' by staff.
- A number of ambitious research objectives supported by University funding, which stand to have positive impact on the student experience and raise the School's profile.

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 ensures that External Examiners sample all Part One and Part Two outcomes (design and non-design) prior to their involvement with assessment boards.
- 10.3.3 The Board notes that it is stated University policy that issues raised in External Examiners' reports are addressed by Course/Programme Management teams and a response prepared and approved at School level before it is issued to the Externals. The Board recommends that all External Examiners receive formal feedback from the University following consideration of their reports. In addition it is good practice for the University to ensure that External Examiners' reports are copied to each other.
- 10.3.4 The Board recommends that the School should have in place systematic processes to ensure that assessment is methodical, transparent and rigorous across all stages of Part One.
- 10.3.5 The Board recommends that the School crystallises its strategy for increasing distinctiveness of the BSc (Hons) Interior Architecture, which is a valuable and unique feature of the School.

-
- 10.3.6 Whilst the RIBA strongly supports the use of group projects as a learning tool for team working, the Board recommends that the School should in future demonstrate through individual marks that students have met all elements of the criteria.
- 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 Scott Sutherland School rightly enjoys a reputation for the exceptional models produced by its students. The School justly wishes to maintain this; however, the Board advises that the emphasis on models may be to the detriment of other graphic skills, which could be developed further. Limiting the time spent making models may also allow students more time to focus on other areas of their work. Several students commented that those working on areas of the models at some distance from the specific site being studied derived less benefit than those working at the focal point of the models.
- 10.4.3 At Part Two, the group exploratory work at the beginning of each project did not contain much diagnostic, critical evaluation. The School is advised to address this.
- 10.4.4 The School is advised to review the advice given to students about recording evidence of process and development of design, such as sketchbooks. The Board considered that students might have benefited from more guidance on the content and organisation of their portfolios.
- 10.4.5 The Board agreed with the External Examiners that there could be more difference between the Part One and Part Two courses, in the approach adopted and content. The School is advised to explore how the Part Two courses could be made more distinctive.
- 10.4.6 The Board was concerned by the decision to run courses by committee rather than course leaders, as had previously been the case. In the light of the lack of distinctiveness of the undergraduate courses, the Board advised the appointment of an individual in charge of each course who would champion academic leadership, which might be a more effective way of defining and running each course.
- 10.4.7 The Board advises the School to explore a wider range of precedents, through greater connection with the locality as well as a range of more geographically distant projects. This would enable the students to increase their architectural vocabulary.
- 10.4.8 At both Parts One and Two, the Board advises that the interrogation of cultural context be developed in association with projects; that is, that there should be greater investigation of the social, cultural and political aspects of context rather than merely a recording of the visual elements.
- 10.4.9 The School is acutely aware of the gender imbalance among staff. The Board advises the School to be proactive in bringing more women into the teaching process

(for example as part time tutors, live clients, guest lecturers and so forth) at the earliest possible opportunity.

11. Summary of Previous Visiting Board Reports

11.1 The last RIBA ARB Visiting Board to the Scott Sutherland School at Robert Gordon University of took place on 1 and 2 November 2001. The Board recommended that **Continued Validation** be given to:

- Part One: Bachelor of Science with Honours in Architecture (four years, full-time)
- Part One: Bachelor of Science with Honours in Interior Architecture (four years, full-time)
- Part Two: Postgraduate Diploma in Advanced Architectural Studies (one year, full-time) and the associated Master of Science in Advanced Architectural Studies.
- Part Two: Postgraduate Diploma in Advanced Architectural Studies (Scottish Architectural History route) (one year, full-time)

The Visiting Board recommended that **Initial Validation** be given to:

- Part One: Bachelor of Science with Honours in Architecture with Languages (four years, full-time)

11.2 Summary of November 2001 Report
Robert Gordon Confirmed Report 30.11.05

“The School’s strengths included a highly committed and supportive staff and a lively, bright and enthusiastic student body. Since the last full visit, a new Head of School has been appointed. The Scott Sutherland School has also been restructured and now includes the disciplines of Construction, Surveying and Property. The School is a part of the Faculty of Design and Technology.

“The Board found that the BSc (Hons) in Architecture, the BSc (Hons) in Architecture and Languages and the BSc (Hons) in Interior Architecture met the appropriate Part One Criteria. The Board was particularly impressed by the standard of design achieved on the BSc (Hons) Architecture with Languages. Students had clearly benefited from their study and professional practice overseas. Although no special conditions are attached to the recognition of the Part One courses, the Board recommended that, although the design projects in all three courses were adequate, the School may wish to consider reviewing and refreshing the design briefs to allow students the opportunity of fully demonstrating their design capabilities.

“The Board found that the PgDip in Advanced Architectural Studies met the appropriate Criteria at Part Two level. The Board noted that students were permitted to undertake one of three options (conservation, ecology and urban design). The Board recommended that the School continues to ensure that students undertaking the Part Two are offered sufficient opportunities in design to reach the Part Two standard, particularly those entering from the BSc (Hons) in Interior Architecture.”

12. Details of the Conditions in Item 8.

12.1 The following conditions have been applied to:

M.Arch Architecture Part Two, 1 year full-time
PG Dip/MSc Architecture Part Two, 1 year full time.

- i. Students graduating from the Part Two courses rely on work from the fourth year of the Part One courses in terms of satisfying criteria for Technology and Environment. Whilst the Board was comfortable with standards set for Part One compliance in Technology and Environment, it was not satisfied that all students met the Part Two Technology and Environment criteria at this point. The diet of design work in the MArch (year 5) did not always allow sufficient exploration of criteria in technology and environment to make good any shortfall.
- ii. A report defining mechanisms as per paragraph 8i should be submitted to the RIBA by 16 December 2005. This is to allow for its consideration by members of the present Board and the RIBA Validation Committee. Any observations may then be communicated to the School before the beginning of the second semester of this academic year and allow for their implementation.
- iii. The sub-group Revisit should take place at the end of the 2005/2006 academic session once all assessment procedures have been completed and final marks confirmed. The Board will wish to examine student work from years four and five and to check the effective operation of mechanisms described in 8.1. The Revisiting

Board will consist of the Chair, plus two other architect members, preferably one academic and one practitioner. As much continuity with the present Board will be provided as practicable.

13. Commentary

13.1 Self-Appraisal and Developments since the last visit

The Board felt that the self-appraisal was rather long and was not particularly rigorous in terms of being self-critical or analytical. Much of it was descriptive and looked towards the future rather than a critical assessment of the present. In addition, although it referred to the fact that the School had responded to previous Visiting Board reports and External Examiners' reports, it did not detail these.

In 2001, the Scott Sutherland School of Architecture and the School of Construction, Property and Surveying were amalgamated into one school, the Scott Sutherland School. This was chiefly to provide a more substantial and stable resource base, to avoid duplication in teaching and administration and to promote interprofessionalism. Some changes to lecture based modules in the early stages of the BSc (Hons) in Architecture, Interior Architecture and Architecture with Languages were made as a result, which were approved in 2002.

In 2003 the RIBA approved proposals for restructuring the Part 1 and Part 2 courses into an MArch award. The BSc (Hons) Architecture with Languages was renamed BSc (Hons) Architecture (European Practice).

The School was committed to providing specialised provision at Part 1 as far as possible within the bounds of

the RIBA/ARB criteria, hence its separate awards for Architecture, Interior Architecture and European Practice. However, it felt that the need to comply with criteria and evolutions of modules led to convergence of the awards to the degree that the courses' individual clarity of purpose had been compromised; hence the decision to cease recruitment to the European Practice programme. The School is reviewing the BSc (Hons) Architecture and BSc (Hons) Interior Architecture awards, with the intention of revitalising and reinvigorating them.

In 2005 the School and University underwent a further restructuring exercise. The reasons for this ranged from creating viable units and reducing bureaucracy, but also to creating new synergies between related disciplines and realise new creative potential. Architecture is now housed within the School of Art, Architecture and Design (which incorporates the Scott Sutherland School of Architecture and the Gray's School of Art) and which forms part of the Faculty of Design and Technology together with the School of Engineering and Built Environment and the School of Computing. The intention is to provide a locus for the Creative Industries within the University.

The University is investing £40 million into developing the campus at Garthdee, with a view to a single campus in ten years' time. The existing Gray's School of Art is due to be refurbished completely. This will be complemented by a brand new building which to which it will be linked. The planned new building will house Architecture and the Faculty of Management.

The Board considered that the School has coped admirably with repeated change, but believes that a period

of stability is now required to allow architecture to consolidate its present position.

The appointment of a Professor of Architecture who is a practising architect in London has had a beneficial effect. The School has defined its philosophical focus as the 'art of making'. The Professor of Architecture is building strong links with practice and practitioners which helps reinforce this pedagogy. The Board encourages the University to support the School in this endeavour, being a rare example of practice and education working together in this way, which is something the RIBA would like to see happening more commonly.

Overall, the School is well poised for further development and enhancement.

Part Three in Scotland is now administered by the Architects' Professional Examinations Authority in Scotland (APEAS) Ltd. This is validated separately. The present Board therefore did not inspect Part 3 work.

13.2 **Documentation and Arrangements for the Visit**

The Board would like to thank the School for its very generous hospitality during the visit. The School provided exemplary documentation, being well-structured, clear and accessible. In the majority of cases the courses were mapped closely against the validation criteria. The only difficulty arose from the lack of documentary evidence regarding the assessment of Part Two Technology and Environment Criteria at Stage 4, hence the condition and recommendation described above.

Practical arrangements for the visit were very good. Requests for additional information and explanations during the visit were met with promptly and willingly.

The Exhibition was excellent and enabled the Board to gain a clear understanding of the five stages of the courses.

The Board would have welcomed better structuring of the portfolios (projects in order with briefs and feedback sheets attached) and more evidence of process and development, such as sketchbooks. The Board felt, in particular, that students might have benefited from more guidance on the contents and organisation of their portfolios.

13.2.1 *Record of Academic Portfolios sampled during the visit*

The Board viewed the work of the 2004/2005 graduating cohorts. The samples supplied were as follows:

BSc (Hons) Architecture

Three high, three middle and three lowest from each year.
Stage 4: from a graduating cohort of 19.

BSc (Hons) Interior Architecture

Three high, three middle and three lowest from each year
Stage 4: from a graduating cohort of 14.

BSc Hons European Practice

Whilst there were Stage 1 and Stage 2 students on this course there were no Stage 4 students on this course in 2004/2005, and no graduates.

M.Arch Architecture Part Two, 1 year full-time

PG Dip/MSc Architecture Part Two, 1 year full time.

Three high, three middle and three lowest
From a graduating cohort of 45.

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

External Examiners commented that requests for more comprehensive information in advance of their visits had been responded to. The External Examiner for the Interior Architecture programme commented that he had yet to see action on some of his key concerns although a report had been written.

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

The University has many years' experience of providing professionally accredited courses. The School of Architecture sits alongside the Gray's School of Art in the new School of Art, Architecture and Design within the Faculty of Design and Technology. In addition to its RIBA validated courses, the School of Architecture also offers undergraduate degrees in Architectural Technology accredited by CIAT (formerly BIAT), Construction Design and Management and Surveying; and Postgraduate courses in Construction and Property Management, Design Management, Ecological Design, Project Management, Facilities Management and Property Development for Architects. The Gray's School of Art provides undergraduate programmes in Design and Craft, Fine Art, Design for Industry and Design for Digital Media. The School of Engineering's course portfolio include a wide range of Mechanical, Electronic, Computing and Communications programmes. All this is

complemented by the range of programmes within the School of Computing.

This offers a myriad of possibilities and opportunities for collaboration and cross-disciplinarity, which the various Schools are starting to explore.

While welcoming the opportunities to develop further their links with art and design, the School staff wish to retain the close links with their colleagues in Built Environment disciplines, which have developed informally but productively over time. The retention and enhancement of the individual identity of the Scott Sutherland School of Architecture, known widely is of paramount importance, a view shared by the Board.

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

13.5.1 Clarity, validity and achievement of course objectives

The School's philosophy is based on furthering the 'art of making buildings', learning through making and a close study of precedent.

The Board considered that the aims of the three courses were appropriate and were largely being achieved. The Board agreed with the School's view that the course objectives of the Interior Architecture and Architecture courses have converged and need to be re-established with separate identities.

13.5.2 Course design and content

The Scott Sutherland School offers three BSc awards leading to Part One: Architecture, Interior Architecture

and Architecture – European Practice. The School has taken the strategic decision to cease recruitment to the European Practice award from the 2005/2006 academic session.

The core of the three courses is essentially the same. Each runs on a year-based structure within a modular framework. The School itself has identified a tendency for Architecture and Interior Architecture to converge to the extent that, at present, they fear that they have lost a large part of their individual identity and focus. The School is concerned about this and is determined to review each course to try to re-establish the differentiation between the two awards. The Board wondered whether a return to the former system of a dedicated course tutor for each course, rather than a committee for both, might be a more effective way of defining and running each course.

The Board believes that the Interior Architecture award is a valuable and unique provision and supports the School unreservedly in its wish to clarify the different aims and content of the Architecture and Interior Architecture awards. Some changes have already taken place; previously students on the Interior Architecture course undertook the same projects as those on the Architecture course, whereas in future they will undertake separate projects at Stages 3 and 4. If the individuality and special provision of the Interior Architecture award can be more firmly defined and established, it will provide a unique specialisation opportunity for students. There is evidence that it is also attractive to students who may not otherwise consider studying architecture. The Board recommends that the School crystallises its strategy for increasing distinctiveness of the Interior Architecture course. The

Board looks forward to the continuing enhancement of the Interior Architecture BSc (Hons).

The School is considering moving to a 3 +2 model in line with the majority of UK Schools of Architecture, but is following closely the current debate about the structure of UK architectural education before making a formal decision.

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

At the time of the visit there was no graduating cohort from the BSc (Hons) Architecture (European Practice) course. The Board was able to view work of students from the earlier stages of the course. However, as the core of the course and its delivery is identical to that of the BSc (Hons) Architecture and the BSc (Hons) Interior Architecture courses, it has every confidence that the remaining students on this course will satisfy the criteria on graduation. The course is, in any case, now closed to new entrants. The following statements therefore refer only to the BSc (Hons) Architecture and BSc (Hons) Interior Architecture courses, for which the work of the 2004/2005 graduating cohorts was available.

- *Design*

The Board was satisfied that all Validation Criteria in the area of Design were being met by all graduates from the BSc (Hons) Architecture and BSc (Hons) Interior Architecture courses.

The Board found the Stage 1 designs very lively. In particular they considered that the 'Shanty Town' project provided a wonderful introduction to architecture and

good opportunity for brief development. At Stage 2 they commended the students' opportunity to work with real clients to develop an archive. Some of the second year work was outstanding.

The Board commented that the project briefs could be overly-directive. They suggested that perhaps students might be given more opportunity to instigate or question a given brief. Most projects involve 'development and instigation of the brief' but the Board considered that there would be some benefit in students being given the opportunity to develop the skills needed to instigate a brief, well before the Stage 5 (Part 2) design project in which students are expected to develop individual projects (usually in pairs). This will be of particular relevance to real practice as many practices gain work through speculative activities in the market place.

The Board also believed benefit could be gained from widening students' architectural vocabulary. The Board encourages the School to review the themes of some of the projects for appropriateness and the opportunities they present to explore various forms of solutions. In particular, they considered that the Auditorium project in Stage 4 perhaps presented only one solution, which limited the students' scope.

The Board was tremendously impressed with the scale of model making and the standards achieved. To complement this they advise that the School should provide opportunity for additional forms of exploration and critical appraisal. The Board believes this could be achieved without compromising the excellent achievements in physical modelling or the School's philosophy of promoting the art of building.

The Board considered that spatial, environmental and material development could be improved, especially as the School wishes to champion 'the art of making'.

The School's concerns regarding the blurring of the edges between Interior Architecture and Architecture were borne out in the students' work; again the Board encourages and supports the School in its efforts to recast the courses in distinctive moulds. The Board noted that the School hopes that the closer links with Art and Design will have a positive impact on Interior Architecture.

The Board advises the School to explore a wider range of precedents, through greater connection with the locality and a range of more geographically distant projects. This would enable the students to increase their architecture vocabulary.

The Board also observed a lack of evidence of critical investigation of the cultural context in many of the project outcomes. At both Parts One and Two, the Board believes that the interrogation of cultural context could be developed in association with projects; that is, that there should be greater investigation rather than statements.

Overall, however, the Board did identify an atmosphere of excitement and energy in the School, which is fostered in part by the new leadership and the visiting guest lecturers.

- *Technology & Environment*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Board was satisfied that all Part One Validation Criteria in the area of Technology and Environment were being met

by all graduates from the BSc (Hons) Architecture and BSc (Hons) Interior Architecture courses.

This aspect of the BSc (Hons) is intended also to satisfy aspects of the Part Two Technology and Environment criteria. The Board wondered if some of the issues identified at Stage 4 might be related to the nature of the project, as described under 'Design' (above).

- *Cultural Context*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Board was satisfied that all Validation Criteria in the area of Cultural Context were being met by all graduates from the BSc (Hons) Architecture and BSc (Hons) Interior Architecture courses. The Board considered that a greater level of critical analysis was needed. In particular they found a tendency for essays to be descriptive rather than critical or analytical. The School might wish to consider whether examination is an appropriate method of assessment in this area, particularly in the later years. The Board also found little evidence of interrogation of cultural context within the design portfolios at Levels 3 and 4.

- *Communication*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Board was satisfied that all Validation Criteria in the area of Communication were being met by all graduates from the BSc (Hons) Architecture and BSc (Hons) Interior Architecture courses.

As stated elsewhere, the School is renowned for the outstanding models made by the students. Increasingly students are using the facilities of the Gray's School of Art to experiment with other materials, such as glass. The

Board enthusiastically encourages students' further exploration of exciting possibilities in the use of materials.

Without detracting from their notable achievements with physical models, the Board believes that the School focuses on this to the exclusion of other forms of communication. In particular, graphic and writing skills would benefit from more attention. The Board also noted that students appear to be using computers as representation tools rather than design tools. Students commented that they felt that tuition on CAAD was very minimal. The Board would also have appreciated more evidence of the learning process, including sketchbooks, in the portfolios.

In their meeting with the Board, some students commented that, when working on the very large models (for example, the City of Edinburgh model) the benefits to the students varied depending on which part of the model an individual was working. Students closer to the site being studied in detail benefited more than those constructing the further reaches. Students were concerned that the time spent on model making outweighed the benefits.

- *Management Practice & Law*

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

Aspects of this are incorporated into studio work and modules from Stage 1, and complemented at Stage 3 by the Professional Practice and Research Methods module.

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

Students undertake the module Professional Practice and Research Methods in Stage 3. The 'year out' is described in the course specification as 'Experience in the Architecture Profession'. The Professional Studies Adviser undertakes to visit all students on their year out, no matter where they are based. Students must log their experience for assessment by the host company and by the academic staff at the School.

Although the School does have contact with local practitioners and a dedicated Professional Studies Adviser, some students mentioned that it was difficult to find placements in the Aberdeen area, particularly at present. The Board appreciates that availability of work placements is not within the School's control.

13.5.4 Progression within the course

The Board found good progression within the course up to Stage 3, although less so beyond that point. They felt that Stage 4 students were not being stretched to the same extent as in earlier years. Project briefs encouraged formal solutions to fixed briefs rather than critical investigations.

The Board noted that the number of student withdrawals in the early years were higher than student failures. This is not uncommon in architecture courses, but is something that the School might wish to investigate further.

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

The School employs a variety of assessment tools, ranging from coursework, crits and examinations. The Board was concerned about some aspects of assessment. Students

are marked on a scale of 1-6, which the Board considered to be a somewhat blunt indicator. However they did think that the grade definitions and descriptors were useful and clear. It was clear from the meeting with students that they understood this scale, but felt that more detailed and prompt feedback would also be beneficial.

The Board considered that some marking in both Parts 1 and 2, without compromising threshold standards, could be inconsistent and sometimes verged on the generous. This was particularly true of design projects. They also suggested that the School might reconsider the appropriateness of examinations in the later stages of the course.

Compensation is not permitted.

The Board recommends that the School should have in place systematic processes to ensure that assessment is methodical, transparent and rigorous across all stages of Part One.

In recent years a significant number of students recruited to the Interior Architecture course have transferred to the Architecture course after a couple of years of study. One reason for this may be the present lack of differentiation between Interior Architecture and Architecture. The School and Board hope that the ongoing review will result in a clearer identity for each course, improving recruitment and retention to the Interior Architecture award.

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

The School provided detailed statistics covering student entry numbers and qualifications, progression and completion. Admissions policy is outlined in the Academic Regulations of the Robert Gordon University. The School requires 4 subjects at SCE H grade (BBBB) to include English (or a subject requiring the use of English), Maths or Science and preferably Art. Applicants to Architecture (European Practice) were required to offer either French or German at Standard Grade 1 or 2 if not higher; however as previously stated, admission to this programme has ceased. Students taking GCE A levels are required to attain 3 Grade C passes to include English (or a subject requiring the use of English), Maths or Science and preferably Art. European Practice applicants were required to attain Grade B at A level in either French or German.

The School will also consider equivalent UK or overseas qualifications, some access programmes, certificates or experiential learning on a case by case basis. Mature students are welcomed. The School also operates an Accreditation of Prior Learning (APCL or APEL) procedure, for which the individual applicant is required to provide evidence of levels of knowledge and skills. Although a formal qualification in Art is preferred, it is not a pre-requisite for consideration, provided that satisfactory evidence of artistic ability, critical awareness and appreciation can be demonstrated at an interview or appraisal, based on presentation of a portfolio. Applicants who do not have formal qualifications in Art are interviewed prior to a decision being made.

There are also articulation arrangements for advanced entry with three institutions in Malaysia (Limkokwing

University College of Creative Technology, Taylor's College Malaysia, and the Malaysian Institute of Art).

Admissions targets have changed regularly over the last few years. Recruitment to the Interior Architecture programme has declined, perhaps due to the identified lack of distinction between it and the Architecture programme. This is also one reason influencing the transfer of a significant proportion of Interior Architecture students to the BSc (Hons) Architecture course. There will be no further recruitment to the BSc Hons Architecture European Practice.

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

13.6.1 Clarity, validity and achievement of course objectives

The School's philosophy is based on furthering the 'art of making buildings', learning through making and a close study of precedent. The Part Two courses aim to 'produce future architects of high quality, flexibility and enhanced potential. The Board considered that the aims of the Part Two programme were appropriate and were largely being achieved. However, there were reservations about the structure of the course, being only one year in length, and relying on work completed in stage 4 to satisfy all validation criteria.

13.6.2 Course design and content

The Part Two programme consists of one major design project divided into three stages/modules, comprising investigation and the development of a master plan (students work in groups), followed by the detailed development of a single building (students work in pairs).

The major design is supported by two theory modules and specialist units. Most of the Part Two criteria for Technology and Environment are intended to be addressed and assessed in Stage 4 of Part One. The Board found this to be problematic, as discussed in section 12.

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

Although the Board was content that overall standards achieved at Part Two are acceptable, it was not convinced that systems were in place to ensure compliance with all the criteria.

- *Design*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Board was satisfied that all Validation Criteria in the area of Design were being met by all graduates from the MArch Architecture PG Dip/MSc Architecture programmes.

A large portion of the final year design project is taken up with site investigation, precedent studies and brief development. This work is undertaken in groups. Much of it was descriptive collation, lacking individual rigorous analysis and interpretation. The Board suggests that if less time was spent on preliminary work, and more time on design development, the quality of the designs and the depth of investigation should improve.

The Design work at Part Two was workmanlike and pragmatic. There was little interest shown in theoretical aspects; development of the materiality of the design work was only adequate. The best work was engagingly modest. However, in spite of lengthy site studies, few schemes

resolved the problem of building on a sloping site or made successful propositions for linking with existing features on the site. Interior exploration was also rather modest.

All of the work inspected was produced by pairs of students working together, in some ways replicating practice. Whilst the Board appreciated the reasons for working in this manner, it was felt that the amount of work and depth of investigation did not reflect the full potential of two people working together. Moreover, the School needs a more overt means of assessing individual student output.

The School has mapped a wide range of validation criteria for assessment against the one project completed at Stage 5. Full Part Two compliance in Design would be easier if more than one project was undertaken or if Stages 4 also formed part of the Part Two assessment in Design.

The current Module Descriptor for the Major Design (ACM003) allows a wide interpretation. The Board felt that greater clarity with regard to satisfying Part Two compliance in design, could be utilised with benefit (particularly in terms of demonstrating the integration of knowledge).

- *Technology & Environment*

The requirements set out in the Stage 4 and 5 modules descriptors for technology and environment (including design) are generally appropriate to Part 2. However, the evidence in the portfolios was thin.

There are no taught courses at Stage 5, but teaching is provided through the medium of project based studio work. This input is specific and contextualised and

focuses on the application of technologies in the development of individual or group propositions. Compliance with the Technology and Environment Part Two criteria are intended to be demonstrated in the final year (i.e. Stage 4) of the BSc (Hons) Architecture, BSc (Hons) Interior Architecture and BSc (Hons) Architecture (European Practice) courses. Inquiries at level 5 may have a high level of technical inquiry, but it is not a pre-requisite.

Technical design investigation of Stage 5 design work was modest in nature. Part Two compliance relied on taking into account Stage 4 work as well. Environmental design considerations need to be strengthened. Structural interrogation was fairly diagrammatic and constructional information was frequently restricted to a single wall section or detail. There appeared to be little three-dimensional exploration of constructional details. There appeared to be little interest in aspects of environmental stability. Design synthesis was implied rather than explicit.

As design work is developed by students working in pairs, it is difficult to know whether all students, individually, have demonstrated their ability 'to integrate knowledge' within 'coherent architectural designs' or within 'academic portfolios'. There are six modules at Stage 4 which have technology and environment content. Only one module deals formally with environmental design, although other tuition is provided through the medium of project based studio work. The Board was concerned that little exposure to aspects of sustainable development was in evidence and would suggest that this area was strengthened.

- *Cultural Context*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Board was satisfied that all Validation Criteria in the area of Cultural Context were being met by all graduates from the from the MArch Architecture PG Dip/MSc Architecture programmes.

The cultural context within design projects was fairly opaque. Few theoretical, ethical and philosophical aspects of design were in evidence, although students are required to make reference to the philosophical rationale of their design solutions in a referenced paper.

There are two taught courses, Philosophy and the Built Environment, and Architectural Theory. The content of these modules ranges widely from ethics and philosophy to sustainable development and theoretical discussion. Papers seen by the Board were adequate, although somewhat brief.

As at Part One, the Board advises the School to encourage students to explore a wider range of precedents, through greater connection with the locality and a range of more geographically distant projects. This would enable the students to increase their architecture vocabulary. Again, there could be greater critical investigation rather than factual statements.

- *Communication*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Board was satisfied that all Validation Criteria in the area of Communication were being met by all graduates from the MArch Architecture PG Dip/MSc Architecture programmes.

Students employed a variety of techniques and media. The Board considered that the best graphic representations were unpretentious and clear. The Board considers that more three-dimensional drawings should be encouraged to explain both design and technical intentions.

Written work was straightforward and well presented, although somewhat modest in output. There is certainly room for greater ambition in this area.

The School may also wish to consider whether the rather limited tuition in computer applications is adequate.

- *Management Practice & Law*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Board was satisfied that all Validation Criteria in the area of Management, Practice and Law were being met by all graduates from the MArch Architecture PG Dip/MSc Architecture programmes.

The work inspected was lively, relevant and diverse, ranging from office simulation reports to essays on discrete subjects. The Board considered that the Professional Practice and Management module, which is a survey course on cost control, business management, procurement, legislation and professional practice, provides a good foundation for graduates entering practice.

13.6.4 Progression within the course

The Board questioned whether Stage 5 was sufficiently distinguished from Stage 4 as regards content and approach. Progression rates for the course appeared typical for the sector.

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

As at Part One, compensation is not permitted.

The Board encourages the School to strive for greater consistency in marking across all levels of achievement. The threshold standard was never compromised, but in some cases the Board felt that it was not clear how the final mark had been generated and, as a result, lower passes seemed in some respects of a higher standard than some marked more generously. The Board recommends that evaluation of group and paired work makes transparent how marks are awarded for individual achievement, in order to clearly demonstrate that all students meet all elements of the criteria.

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

The School provided statistics regarding entry, progression and completion. Entrants should have completed a 4 years Architectural Study leading to a recognised honours degree or equivalent and have exemption from RIBA Part 1. Direct entry to Stage 5 is not permitted. Students entering with a 3 year Part One must undertake Stages 4 and 5 to be considered for Part Two.

- 13.7 **External examining arrangements**

External Examiners are a central tenet of the University's quality assurance procedures. They are normally appointed for a period of four years to a specific course, and are issued with both University and School level guidelines which details their remit within their particular discipline. The School had supplied External Examiners' reports

dating from 2001, which the Board found very frank and informative.

The Board was pleased to meet all External Examiners currently attached to the Part One and Part Two courses, some of whom are demitting office this year. They form a very strong team with years of experience of architectural education and practice.

The External Examiners were supportive of the School and its philosophy and ambitions. They identified a great spirit in the School, and considered it a well-grounded school aiming to regain engagement with the art of building, and keen to look to the future. The Externals were confident that the courses were sound and ensured that graduates were competent in core areas.

The Examiners felt that the last year had seen a striking difference in the School, which was remarkable in such a short time. They had observed a sharpening of focus in the last academic session, one aspect of which was an attempt to differentiate between the Honours courses and Part Two, the Part Two having previously lacked focus to some extent. One reason behind this, in the opinion of various Externals and indeed staff, had been that the students poured so much energy into Honours year work, which was more structured and led to a classified award, that there was a danger of losing momentum and focus at Part Two. However, this was being addressed very positively and in the opinion of the externals, the differentiation is much more apparent than last year and students are demonstrating a different level of research and investigation and a greater sense of ambition and clarity. The Examiners' overall impression was that the course was continually improving. Stage 4 had also been

tightened up, resulting in marked improvements without losing the preoccupation with the essence of building. The Interior Architecture External Examiner confirmed there was a sense of reinvigoration about this course, but thought that even more could be explored to provide greater contrast with the Architecture course and provide greater benefit for students. Some felt that the discontinuation of the European Practice Part 1 was a lost opportunity.

During their visits the Externals were able to confirm that the assessments of students were generally correct, with some moderation. The Examiners felt that the best student work was very well realised, and the weaker work competent. Threshold standards were sound.

Some earlier External Examiners' reports had been critical of the University process; however it had improved over the last few years. At the most recent session they felt that they had been briefed well and received more information in advance, for example, having sight of and the opportunity to comment on examination papers. The External Examiners commented that they did not always see samples of all student outputs, compromising their ability to confirm that all graduates were meeting all validation criteria. In the 2003/2004 academic session they had only been able to sample student work, which they found unsatisfactory. The School listened to their concerns and re-instated the practice of interviewing all students.

The External Examiners commented that they did not receive a response from the University following submission of their reports. It is stated University policy that issues raised in External Examiners' reports are

addressed by Course/Programme Management teams and a response prepared and approved at School level before it is issued to the Externals.

The Board recommends that all External Examiners receive formal feedback from the University following consideration of their reports. In addition it is good practice for the University to arrange for External Examiners' reports to be copied to each other.

In conclusion, the External Examiners agreed that the pace of change at the School was appropriate and that it was on the right trajectory.

13.8 **Arrangements for Monitoring Professional Experience**

The Professional Studies Adviser undertakes to visit all students on their work placements, which helps to ensure that firms and students understand their respective obligations and responsibilities. It also provides the students with a link to the School in case they need advice or guidance. The Professional Studies Adviser also provides guidance for post-Part 2 students intending to present themselves for Part 3 under the APEAS system.

13.9 **Students:**

The Board met approximately 20 representatives of the student body. These came from all stages of the course (apart from Stage 1, the first year of the BSc (Hons) courses) and included year out students and recent graduates.

The students were generally supportive of the School and its staff. They found the staff approachable and available,

as they were often in the studios and happy to be asked for advice or assistance.

The students were attracted to the School by a combination of its location, the excellent facilities and the possibilities for interdisciplinary working, for example construction and surveying. The Interior Architecture course was also appealing. The Interior Architecture students had been disappointed by the course content but were aware of changes being made to improve this.

The students felt that the course was demanding and clear progression was apparent from one project to the next. They were challenged in crits to justify each decision they had made. The students said that they understood the assessment regime but would prefer faster and more detailed feedback. This would allow them to identify gaps or areas which could usefully be improved before summative assessments.

Students considered that the focus on models was a useful educational experience, but the benefits of these could vary depending on which area of the site they were working. They also thought that this did not leave sufficient time to concentrate on other aspects of the courses. They would also welcome more formal teaching in CAD. It was also remarked that the practice of group and pairs working could allow the less motivated to 'get away with less' which was frustrating for their partners who put the hours in.

Students also commented on the lack of suitable employment in the area at present. Many are local and would prefer to gain their practical experience in the region. However few local practices had appropriate

positions available at present. On a more positive note, the students commented that all Masters graduates who had sought jobs had been successful.

13.10 **Staff:**

The meeting with staff was very well attended. The Board commended the staff body for its frankness and willingness to discuss openly current issues with which the School is engaged and the effects, both positive and challenging, of repeated internal restructuring.

The staff are very loyal to the School and the opportunities it presents to them as educators. In particular they appreciate the good facilities, the access to students they are afforded, the commitment of their colleagues, the philosophy and the high quality of the visitors who help enthuse the students and bring an added dimension to the School. The staff also support the new management team, which provides a separation of function between academic leadership (the responsibility of the new Professor of Architecture) and the practical management of the School, led by the Associate Head of School.

The Board echoes the staff's hope that a period of stability will now be possible, to allow them to settle into the new structure and consolidate their position and relationships with sister disciplines, without diluting the identity of the Scott Sutherland School.

The majority of staff at present come from academic backgrounds and there is a relative lack of current practice. However, they believe that the pedagogic focus of learning by making compensates for this. The Board would encourage the School to investigate the greater

engagement of local practitioners with the School's courses.

The School is acutely aware of the gender imbalance among staff, which has been exacerbated by the departure of a couple of female staff. The Board encourages the School to seek ways of bringing more women into the teaching process (for example as part time tutors, live clients, guest lecturers and so forth).

The staff:student ratio during the last five academic sessions has varied between 1:16.9 to the present 1:18.7, which is on the high side but not unusual. The School anticipates that it will remain consistent for the next academic session.

13.11 Research

The University has an ambitious research strategy, aiming to return over 50% at Grade 4 or above in the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise. This will provide a marked increase on submissions to the last RAE in 2001. There is a dedicated Vice-Principal with responsibility for research. The University has also introduced contracts for Research Fellows and Research Assistants rather than the ad hoc recruitment which can happen. The Built Environment and Art and Design strands have been brought together to form a greater critical mass and a more stable research base.

The University is preparing for 2008 by running 'mock' RAE exercises undertaken by experienced RAE Panel members to assess current levels of preparation and achievement. Feedback has been very positive so far. Most architecture research at the Scott Sutherland School has been from the Built Environment perspective; they intend

to enter under Architecture and Built Environment in 2008, in which, it is understood, Design-based research will be fully recognised.

Most research in the School maps onto the Scottish Executive's Policy on Architecture for Scotland, the broad thrust of which includes sustainability, climate changes and social policy objectives. The chief research group in the School is the 'Environments for People' group, whose main interests are "social, economic and physical resource sustainability and conservation in the built environment, especially housing and domestic built environments, and the evaluation of the design of built environments in terms of their ability to meet the needs of the widest possible range of people functionally, perceptually and economically."

The staff consider that the impact of research on teaching is steadily increasing, as most research-active staff also have some teaching responsibilities, although only a few of the core teaching staff were particularly research active and felt that they might have been better supported in their research ambitions. The School's research also serves to keep staff up-to-date, provides useful case studies, enhances studio work, provides opportunities for student work and/or sponsorship and maintains links with national and international researchers and research groups. The Board encourages the School to continue seeking the enhancement of the taught courses through its research expertise, particularly at Stages 4 and 5

The School wishes to increase the number of students proceeding to research degrees.

13.12 Equal Opportunities:

The University has an Equity and Diversity policy, to which the School adheres, which is designed to ensure compliance with all current legislation and is sufficiently flexible to accommodate future legislation being developed.

The School provided a detailed breakdown of gender and ethnic origin of all students and staff. At present the gender balance of students stands at 62% male and 38% female, which is the average for all UK schools of architecture (RIBA 2004/2005 statistics). The School commented that the Interior Architecture programme is often appealing to students who may not otherwise have considered architecture as a degree or a profession.

Widening participation

The School recruits strongly in Scotland, but also attracts a significant number of overseas students.

13.13 **Resourcing and facilities;**

Resources at the Scott Sutherland School are extremely good. The entrance has recently been refurbished, and the relocation of the Architecture library to the Georgina Scott Sutherland library has created social and exhibition space. The facilities stand to be improved yet further by the capital expenditure planned by the University. To inform this, the University has looked at the pedagogical issues of studio practice, which includes providing work space for each student wherever possible.

Studios

The Board found the studios to be well appointed and adequate. There is a lively studio atmosphere. Recent increases in overall numbers, coupled with fluctuations in

year cohort sizes, mean that it is no longer possible to guarantee provision of dedicated drawing tables for each student. However, the School seeks to maintain this practice wherever possible.

Workshops

Architecture students have access to a wide range of workshops in the School of Art. Workshops and drawing rooms are well equipped and the Board heard only positive comments from students. Architecture students have been using the drawing rooms more since the faculty restructuring, which they felt had been beneficial. They are also experimenting more with different materials, such as glass and resin. There remains a modest hand-tools workshop in the Scott Sutherland School building.

Library

The specialist Architecture library used to be housed in the same building as the School, but moved some 6 years ago to the Georgina Scott Sutherland library, a brand-new, purpose-built building, which is the Home Library (i.e. chief) site for the Aberdeen Business School, the Faculty of Design and Technology (comprising the Scott Sutherland School, Gray's School and Built Environment) and the Faculty of Health and Social Care collections.

The Architecture and Construction collection numbers some 19500 items. In addition to this, there is a specialist, antiquarian architecture collection of 500 volumes dating back several centuries. The Library also subscribes to 126 architecture and surveying periodicals.

The Library budget is generous, but significantly decreasing year on year. Relatively few architectural publications are available electronically, and the visual

nature of the discipline means that books are a more effective means of communication, therefore it is important that the staff and librarians retain the resources to maintain and enhance the book collection as much as possible. The budget situation will need careful monitoring.

The growing expense of journals may lead to some cutbacks. There is no written acquisitions policy; architecture staff are free to make suggestions to the Liaison Librarian. The Librarian is exploring ideas for encouraging students to make greater use of books as a resource, rather than relying on internet search engines. Tutors can identify on the on-line catalogue which books are recommended for which parts of the course. Depending upon the title, books are available for loan for varying periods. Interlibrary loans are also available.

All students are given an induction session which introduces them to the collections and how to use them effectively. They also receive lectures on research skills.

Students may also access a number of on-line databases, including the Construction Information Service from Technical Indexes, Construction and Building Abstracts from NBS/ARUP and the Avery index. There are also video collections and a slide collection of 110000 images, which are being gradually digitised. The Library also has a licence for TV recording and can obtain copies of older programmes through an agency.

Opening times are generous, and there is the usual provision of scanning, photocopying and printing facilities. There are also Quiet and Silent study areas, and small seminar rooms can be hired.

Information Technology

Computer facilities have improved considerably since the last visit. There are four full-time, qualified IT specialist staff in the School. The School provides 117 PCs. Students also have access to Macs in the Gray's School of Art provided permission is granted by staff. Software provided includes AutoCad, ArchiCad, Photoshop, 3D StudioViz, HevaComp, Microplanner and Sketchup. Hours of access to computing facilities are generous.

Each computing lab has printing facilities up to A3 size and there is also access to flat-bed scanners. Students also have access to large format copying, scanning and colour printing at A0+ size, and large format laminating at A1 size.

The Board considered that the course was well provided for and informal discussions with students confirmed that they were happy with provision generally, although they would prefer more formal teaching of computer applications. At present they are formally taught Photoshop in the 1st year and introduced to AutoCad in the second.

14. Documentation Provided

Prior to the Visit the School provided:

Critical Self-Appraisal
Completed Questionnaire Document (including External Examiners' Reports for 2001-2005)
Supplementary information
Curriculum Vitae of Staff
Mapping of documentation against the RIBA/ARB criteria

Module Descriptors
Student Entry Data

In the Base Room the School provided:

Art and Design Current Programme Documentation
Architecture and Built Environment Programme
Documentation, Session 2004-2005
Architecture Courses Coursework Assignments, Session
2004-2005
Architecture Courses Examination Papers, Session 2004-
2005
Project Briefs for Stages 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5: 2004/2005
Internal Analysis of Provision, including

- Annual Programme Appraisals
- Deans' Reports
- Faculty Quality Enhancement Sub-Group papers
- Student Questionnaire Results
- University 'Portfolio Analysis'

Meeting Minutes, Session 2004-2005, including

- School Executive Meetings
- Programme Team Meetings
- Staff-Student Liaison Meetings
- Faculty Board Meetings

Reports and Audits, comprising:

- QAA Benchmark Statement
- QAA Subject Review Report June 2001
- School Review Report 2002
- Research Overview

RGU Academic Quality Handbook.

Assessment Handbook

RGU Financial Statements year end 31 July 2004
Employment Mentor Comments on PEDR returns for
2004/5
RGU Academic Regulations
RGU Organisational Regulations
Architecture and Surveying Undergraduate Course
Information 2005
Scott Sutherland School Architecture / Construction /
Property Surveying
Architecture course brochure
RGU Postgraduate Course Guide 2006
Gray's School of Art Course Guide
RGU Undergraduate Prospectus 2006
Creative Energies: Gray's School Degree Show 2005 DVD

Board members also had access to a networked PC
allowing access to a wide range of additional School,
Faculty and University documentation.