

Royal Institute of British Architects

**Report of the RIBA Visiting Board
to the University of Westminster**

Confirmed by the RIBA Education Committee 6 July 2009

**Department of Architecture
School of Architecture and the Built
Environment**

Part One:

BA/BSc(Hons) Architecture

BA (Hons) Architecture with Interior Design

BA (Hons) Architecture with Urban Design

BSc (Hons) Architecture with Architectural Engineering

Part Two:

Graduate Diploma in Architecture

Part Three:

**Post-Graduate Diploma in Professional Practice in
Architecture**

Date of Visiting Board: 23/24 October 2008

1. **Information about the courses**

1.1 **Courses offered for revalidation:**

BA/BSc (Hons) Architecture
BA (Hons) Architecture with Interior Design
BA (Hons) Architecture with Urban Design
BSc (Hons) Architecture with Architectural Engineering
(Part One) all 3 years full time

Graduate Diploma in Architecture (Part Two) 2 years full
time or 3 years part time by agreement
Post-Graduate Diploma Professional Practice in
Architecture (Part Three 1 year full time or longer by
agreement

1.2 **Address of the institution where the courses are
delivered**

Department of Architecture
School of Architecture and the Built Environment
University of Westminster
35 Marylebone Road
London NW1 5LS

T: 020 7911 5864
Fax 020 7911 5171
W: <http://www.westminster.ac.uk>

1.2 **Name of awarding body**
University of Westminster

1.3 **Name of Head of School**
Ms Katharine Heron

2. **Membership of the Visiting Board**

2.1 The members of the RIBA Visiting Board for the visit on
23 and 24 October 2008 were:

David McClean (Chair)
Professor Richard Parnaby (Vice-chair)
Mark Way
Michael Halsam (co-professional member)
John Hickey
Kim Loddo (regional representative)
Gordon Kelly
Jaymeni Patel (student representative)

Professor Jim Low (for the RIBA Department of
Education) was in attendance as secretary to the board.

3. **Procedures and 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 September 2003,
effective from September 2003, 'RIBA Criteria for
Validation', published March 2002, effective from
September 2003, and 'Description & Regulations for the
recognition of courses, programmes and examinations in
Professional Practice and Management, (Part 3)'. For more
information see www.architecture.com.

4. **Recommendations of the Visiting Board**

4.1 At its meeting on 6 July 2009, the RIBA Education
Committee confirmed **continued validation** of the:

Part One: BA/BSc (Hons) Architecture

Part One: BA (Hons) Architecture with Interior Design
 Part One: BA (Hons) Architecture with Urban Design
 Part One: BSc (Hons) Architecture with Architectural
 Engineering (all 3 years part time)

Part Two: Graduate Diploma in Architecture
 (2 years full time, or 3 years part-time by agreement)

Part Three: Post-Graduate Diploma in Professional
 Practice in Architecture
 (1 year part time or longer by agreement)

- 4.2 The next full Visiting Board for this course will take place in 2012.

5. Recommendation of the Visiting Board to the Commonwealth Association of Architects, Construction Industry Council and ARB

- 5.1 The Visiting Board recommends to the Construction Industry Council that the part 1 course met the Common Learning Outcomes for Degree Courses in the Built Environment.
- 5.2 The Visiting Board recommends to the ARB that the part 1 course met all points of the Professional Qualifications Directive 2005/36/EC.

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 part 1 course and

examinations listed in 4.1 above satisfied all the criteria for validation 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 the previous year of the courses listed in 4.1 was inspected during the visit and 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 requirement 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

10. Summary of the recommendations, advice, and commentary contained in the full report

10.1 The University of Westminster Department of Architecture is one of four departments in the School of Architecture and Built Environment, the others being Transport, Urban Development and Regeneration and Property and Construction.

It is a large department with over 600 students who benefit from having access to a range of resources including, studio facilities, excellent workshops, IT and an excellent library. These go to providing a good learning environment within a central London location. The new P3 exhibition hall is an impressive space that provides the opportunity for links with media and art and design.

The Department continues to enjoy a high profile through student successes in major national and international competitions, including the RIBA silver medals and RIBA dissertation medal awards to students.

10.2 The Visiting Board found many of the strengths identified in the last Visiting Board report had been maintained and continued be strengths of the school, these include:

- A strong, committed and enthusiastic staff team, which is well led and that provides a wide range of expertise
- A rigorous, well structured and managed Part 3 course
- Its location in central London provides an opportunity for students to access a wide range of facilities, events and activities that support and

enhance their learning. It is also a reason for many students selecting the University

- The excellent technical studies course at Part 1 and Part 2 continues to provide experienced specialist practitioners in technology teaching.
- Continues to provide an impressive resource base, particularly IT and workshops. The minimal refurbishment of the former concrete construction hall provides a vast new space, P3, for a wide range of creative activities.
- Excellent library facilities
- Students were supportive of the Department and the University. A strength is the diverse range of students recruited.
- The Visiting Board was encouraged by the research profile that has been developed since the last visit and notes that sixteen staff were returned to the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 2008. The students reported that they were made aware of the research through exhibitions of work and open public lectures. Research is clearly an emergent strength.

10.3 Recommendations
There were no specific recommendations attached to the continued validation of the Part 1, Part 2, or Part 3.

10.4 Advice
The Visiting Board offers the following advice to the course team on desirable improvements, which are felt, will assist course development, and raise standards:

- The Visiting Board commends the commitment to encouraging students to work in the studios. However, in order to assist in

achieving this, an increase in storage facilities for students materials and work are required.

- The studio accommodation was generally well used but the Visiting Board expressed concern that any further erosion of space would be a disadvantage to the courses. The Board noted that the efficient use of space created its own problems where the studios have to be used as crit spaces.
- The Visiting Board would encourage further development of the close connections with other disciplines within Built Environment and Art and Design
- The Visiting Board supports the Department’s request for an improvement to the University website which would promote the Department and illustrate student work. This is an important element in promoting the Department and in recruitment.
- Students requested closer engagement to ensure more effective course committee meetings.

11. Summary of Previous Visiting Board Reports

- 11.1 The last RIBA Visiting to the University of Westminster took place on 14-15 October 2004. the Visiting Board recommended that Continued Validation be granted to:

Part One: Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Architecture
 Part One: BA (Hons) Architecture with Interior Design
 Part One: BA (Hons) Architecture with Urban Design

Part One: BSc (Hons) Architecture with Architectural Engineering
 (all Part One courses are three years full-time)

Part Two: Graduate Diploma in Architecture
 (two years full-time, or three years part-time agreement)

Part Three: Post-graduate diploma in Professional Practice in Architecture
 (one year part-time or longer by agreement)

- 11.2 Summary of 2004 Visiting Board report
 “The Department has substantially increased its external profile through the award of RIBA medals to students and staff (RIBA Silver Medal in 2001 and the joint award of the RIBA Gold Medal and Annie Spink Award in 2002)”

“Westminster’s Department of Architecture has a strong commitment to recruiting and supporting a diverse student intake. Its students have access to a good range of studio facilities and resources, particularly so given its base in the heart of London. The Department makes use of its London location by employing an impressive team of practitioners to contribute to design and technology teaching. Alongside this traditional commitment to teaching, the University has appointed a new Professor with a remit to develop postgraduate and research activities.”

The strengths of the School include:

- “a well-led, strong, cohesive and energetic staff team with a wide range of expertise and a good blend of full-time academics and practitioners;”
- “its commitment to recruiting and supporting students from non-traditional backgrounds and particularly the summer school initiative;”

- “the excellent technical studies courses provided to both Part One and Part Two courses and the substantial involvement of experienced specialist practitioners in technology teaching;”
- “the impressive resource base in the Department, particularly the IT and workshop facilities;”
- “the excellent library resources;”
- “the impressively managed, thoroughly taught and rigorously assessed Part Three.”

Recommendations

“The Board recommends that the Department provide better guidance, particularly for weaker students, to ensure they move towards final design outcomes at a sufficiently early stage.”

“The Board would recommend that the Department reconsider the timing of the specialist technology input provided to Part one students in their final design projects. The Board believes that scheduling some of this support at an earlier stage in the project might better support students in integrating technology with design and help ensure that technological issues better informed design outcomes.”

Advice

“The Board advises the Department to look for ways in which enhanced linkages can be developed between years one and two to better prepare students for progression to the later stages of the course.”

“The Board advises the Department to reconsider the structure of design work in the second and third year of the Part One programme and particularly to consider whether the opportunity to undertake two projects of different

characteristics might better enable students strengths to demonstrate their full capabilities.”

“The board would advise the Department to continue to investigate the causes of student non-progression and be prepared to introduce new measures as additional insights are gained.”

“The Board understands that the Department has plans for further developing the pathways and would advise the Department to include in its considerations a discussion of the link between pathways and design outcomes.”

“The Board also advises the Department to work with its External Examiners to ensure that the full mark range is effectively employed.”

“The Board advised that it would now be timely for it to formalise its vision for the future.”

“The Board would advise the University that the Department of Architecture’s central location was seen as a major advantage by staff and a key reason for their decision to join its courses.”

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 Critical Self-Appraisal was informative and a good example of a clearly written, well- focused self-appraisal. The Board also appreciated the provision of a critical appraisal

produced by the students which was issued to the Board at the meeting with the students. It would have been helpful if this could have been supplied in advance.

The Department reported that it had been encouraged by positive report received from the Visiting Board in 2004 and the Mid-Term Visit in 2005/06 and that there had been no major changes made to the courses.

13.2 **Documentation and Arrangements for the Visit**

Overall, the arrangements for the Visit were excellent and the Board thanks the Department, including staff and students, for their generous hospitality. The Department provided all the documentation required for the visit in good time and was available in hard copy or as a CD ROM. The documentation was clearly structured and easy to understand.

All academic portfolios required by the Board were available and well organised. The board acknowledges the difficulties of the organisation of a Visiting Board during term time but the display of student work felt constrained by the space available. The exhibition was concise and well selected and the tour of the work was accompanied by clear and concise explanations from members of staff.

The meetings and activities required by the Board were organised in exemplary fashion enabling the Board to keep to the Visit timetable.

13.2.1 *Record of Academic Portfolios sampled during the visit*

The Board viewed the work of the 2007/08 graduating cohorts.

Part One, BA/BSc (Hons) Architecture programme

(drawn from all four pathways)

Year One: 3 lowest pass, 2 middle and 2 high portfolios of the cohort entering in 2007/8

Year Two: 3 lowest pass, 2 middle and 2 high portfolios of the cohort entering in 2006/7

Year Three: 1 lowest pass from each of the 8 studio groups, 2 middle and 2 high portfolios of the cohort entering in 2005/06

Part Two, Graduate Diploma in Architecture

Year One: 3 lowest pass, 2 middle and 2 high portfolios of the cohort entering in 2007/08

Year Two: ^1 lowest pass from each of 6 studio groups, 2 middle and 2 high portfolios of the cohort entering in 2006/07

Part Three, post-Graduate Diploma in Professional Practice in Architecture

The Board examined a total of 15 complete assessed examples of work of the lowest pass, middle and high levels.

13.3 **Responses made to previous Visiting Board report and external examiner comments**

The Board noted that the Department had considered and addressed the recommendations and advice of the 2004 Visiting Board. The responses were fully outline in the report of the Mid-Term Monitoring Visit of 28 June 2006, and are also covered in the relevant sections of the present report.

13.4 **Context of the courses within the wider provision of the School and Faculty**

The Department of Architecture is one of four departments in the School of Architecture and Built Environment (SABE) located at the University of Westminster's Marylebone site together with the Westminster School of Business. The other departments in SABE are Transport, Urban Development and Regeneration, and Property and Construction.

The Department of Architecture offers the following series of MAs:

<p>MA Architecture and Digital Media MA Interior Design MA Architecture, Cultural Identity and Globalisation</p> <p>The MA Urban Design is a well-established course in the Department of Urban Development and Regeneration and the BA (Hons) Architecture Technology is in the Department of Property and Construction.</p>	<p>13.5.3 Quality and coverage of the syllabus</p> <p>- <i>Design</i></p> <p>On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Visiting Board confirms that all graduates of the BA/BSc (Hons) Architecture programmes met all Part One criteria in the area of Design.</p> <p>The Board had expected to see clear differences in the design outcomes from different pathways and therefore felt that the outcomes need to be more distinctive if the Department continues offering four different awards. The Board found comparability between studios varied and some project briefs were unchallenging. It was common in the portfolios to find drawings lacking information on sites and context and there was a general lack of text on drawing which often made comprehending designs difficult. The Board was disappointed not to see more development work and sketchbooks in portfolios. Equally there was an absence of models but the External examiners reassured the Board there were models but there was a problem of storing them. However there were excellent examples of CAD work.</p>
<p>13.5 Detailed Commentary on the Courses leading to Part One qualification</p> <p>BA (Hons) Architecture BA (Hons) Architecture with Urban Design BA (Hons) Architecture with Interior Design BSc (Hons) Architecture with Architectural Engineering</p>	<p>- <i>Technology & Environment</i></p> <p>On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Visiting Board confirms that all graduates of the BA/BSc (Hons) Architecture programmes met all Part One criteria in the area of Technology and Environment.</p> <p>An impressive technical studies programme is delivered largely by a wide range of practitioners. This is a strength which is demonstrated in the project work where there is integration of technology and environment in the design. The Board felt that sustainability was not evident in designs.</p>
<p>13.5.1 Clarity, validity and achievement of course objectives.</p> <p>These were clearly set out in the programme handbook for the overall programme, plus additional statements for each of the pathway degrees. The Department provided a helpful mapping of the Part One programme onto the RIBA criteria with where the evidence demonstrating achievement of the criteria could be found.</p>	<p>- <i>Cultural Context</i></p> <p>On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Visiting Board confirms that all graduates of the BA/BSc</p>
<p>13.5.2 Course design and content</p> <p>The Part One programme is a modular framework with first year taught in small groups and design in years two and three is taught in eight “vertical” studios comprising students from both years.</p> <p>The Board noted the strong support for the Part One pathways from students, but observed little evidence of the specialist options influencing design outcomes. This view was confirmed by the external examiners and the same observation was made by the 2004 Visiting Board.</p>	

(Hons) Architecture programmes met all Part One criteria in the area of Cultural Context.

This continues to be a strength of the programme. Foreign study visits are undertaken to support design projects. The extended essay of 5000 to 7000 words undertaken in year three provides the students with the ability to undertake their own research.

- *Communication*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Visiting Board confirms that all graduates of the BA/BSc (Hons) Architecture programmes met all Part One criteria in the area of Communication.

A wide range of techniques and media, particularly CAD result in excellent presentation of designs and ideas. As previously stated, however, the Board was disappointed not to see more sketchbooks and development work. In meetings with students during the visit they were confident, thoughtful and articulate.

- *Management Practice & Law*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Visiting Board confirms that all graduates of the BA/BSc (Hons) Architecture programmes met all Part One criteria in the area of Management Practice and Law.

The Board found management, practice and law were well integrated into the degree programme.

- *Preparation for the Academic Year in Practice*

The Board found well established and well managed programme for students preparing for the year out in practice. A module on Preparing for Practice is delivered in year three. It provides engagement with practice through the week of work placement and reflection on that experience. It

also provides experience of CV writing, completing a sample PEDR, understanding office procedures and management of projects and the ability to appraise their own working practices within a team.

13.5.4 **Progression within the course**

The Board was informed that progression falls below the University's benchmark of an 85% progression rate. The staff recognised the complexity of student profiles. Contributing factors include the number of students who have a background of personal and financial problems, that students have not been taught to be independent learners and it is seen partly as a London phenomenon.

The Department has sought to address the problem of progression by introducing the following strategy;

- Raising entry tariff points to 320
- Early assessment in the academic year to identify failing students
- Monitoring pass rates on individual modules
- Introducing summer school to support students re-submitting to the September examination board.
- Identifying students with personal problems and helping to access support and guidance from University Student services.

Staff reported that they were beginning to see results from the strategy put in place.

13.5.5 **Assessment**

The Department employs an appropriate range of assessment methods. Students must pass all modules to progress. There are two assessment points in the academic year, one is at the end of the year and the other is for

referred or deferred work. Formative assessment is at intervals during the year.

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

The University and the Department provide clear information on the entry requirements for the BA/BSc in Architecture programme. The University operates a system of awarding credit for prior learning, either accredited (APCL) or experiential (APEL). Students may apply for exemptions through APEL which is considered by the Course Leader. The Department does not admit students to year 3 of the degree programme.

13.6 Detailed Commentary on the Course leading to Part Two qualification

13.6.1 Clarity, validity and achievement of course objectives

The Board found the Part Two Course Document and Handbook provided a clear statement of the aims and objectives of the programme and module descriptors include aims learning outcomes and assessment strategy and criteria.

13.6.2 Course design and content

Central to the Part Two programme are studio Design Projects in each of the two years. Students can select which studio to join from seven studios in 2007/08 and are normally required to change studios between years.

The Graduate Diploma is normally full-time and undertaken in two years but students may elect to study in a part-time pattern, either by mixed mode over three years or entirely part-time over four years. It was reported that few students were part-time.

There was a clear weekly timetable that sets out what is expected of students.

13.6.3 Quality and coverage of the syllabus

- *Design*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Visiting Board confirms that all graduates of the Graduate Diploma in Architecture met all Part Two criteria in the area of Design.

Although the criteria were met the Board felt that projects were not challenging and were insufficiently complex. The Board on some occasions found difficulty in understanding the nature of the project particularly when there was a degree of analysis and repetitive mapping.

- *Technology & Environment*

On the basis of the sample portfolios provided, the Visiting Board confirms that all graduates of the Graduate Diploma in Architecture met all Part Two criteria in the area of Technology and Environment.

The technology course is excellent. The technology and environment input benefits from the Department's central London location in being able to use eminent practitioners.

- *Cultural Context*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Visiting Board confirms that all graduates of the Graduate Diploma in Architecture met all Part Two criteria in the area of Cultural Context.

The Board found that there was a high level of importance placed on the dissertation which was evident in the standard of work produced. It was evident that staff research was underpinning the teaching in history and theory.

- *Communication*

On the basis of the sample of portfolios provided, the Visiting Board confirms that all graduates of the Graduate Diploma in Architecture met all Part Two criteria in the area of Communication.

Overall, good standards of literacy were evident in student work. Portfolios contained impressive CAD work. Part Two students were confident and articulate in meetings with the Board.

- *Management Practice & Law*

On the basis of the sample of portfolio provided, the Visiting Board confirms that all graduates of the Graduate Diploma in Architecture met all Part Two criteria in the area of Management Practice and Law.

The Board found the management, practice and law provision to be current and well-managed.

13.6.4 **Progression within the course**

The level of progression appeared to be normal.

13.6.5 **Assessment**

The Board found a varied and appropriate range of assessment procedures across the Part Two course.

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

The normal entry requirement is a good first degree (First or upper-second class honours) in architecture with exemption from Part One of RIBA. A year out in practice is also a formal requirement. All Graduate Diploma applicants must attend an interview.

13.7 **Detailed Commentary on the Course leading to Part Three qualification**

The Part Three is a strength of the Department. Overall, the Board found the course content and delivery to be excellent. Students produced very good candid case studies which reflected a maturity. Although there was no outstanding work there was, equally, no poor work and even the lowest pass was more than adequate.

13.8 **External examining arrangements**

The Board met with 16 of the External Examiners appointed at the Part One, Two and Three of the programme. The Department has appointed highly experienced External Examiners, both academic and practitioners. The External Examiners confirmed that the examination processes and procedures were well organised and a lot of resourcing is put into the examination process.

The External Examiners were consistent in their compliments to the Department which included:

- Overall the examination process is good
- The Department is responsive to issues raised by the External Examiners
- It is an ambitious Department with impressive leadership and appears to enjoy a good relationship with the University
- Design research was seen as integral to the life of the Department and design-led research is seen in studio work

The External Examiners felt that the students identify with the degree pathways, although they often could not identify the particular pathways from observation of the student work. They did not view the pathways as an issue but what was important was that they met the criteria.

13.9 **Arrangement for Monitoring Professional Experience**
As described in section 13.5.3 there is a preparatory module in year three of the degree programme. Generally arrangements for monitoring professional experience are well structured but it places a heavy administration load on the member of staff with responsibility for professional practice.

13.10 **Students**
The Board met with over 50 students from all years of the Part One and Part Two courses, together with students working during their professional experience employment. The students were most positive about their experience on the courses. Among the strengths of the Department the students mentioned particularly the following:

- Receiving a good education with good teaching
- Arrangements to support dissertations are excellent
- Central London location
- Excellent workshop and IT facilities
- Degree course pathways are seen as giving a depth to the course
- Good relationship with staff, who are available and accessible.

Students believed that consideration of the following issues would improve their overall experience

- Lack of studio accommodation
- Improve the image of the studios which look bare and empty
- Need for storage facilities. The lack of lockers to allow students to store models and work was one of the reasons given by the students for not working in the studios
- The need to improve the quality of the publicity for the courses, particularly on the University website

- Would welcome introducing the interviewing of applicants for the course
- A greater student voice on issues

The students reported that they had no connection with ARCHAOS but that a student architecture society was at an embryonic stage.

13.11 **Staff**
The Board enjoyed an open and wide ranging discussion with a large group of full-time and part-time staff. The Department benefits from highly qualified staff and part-time practitioners. The staff reported that their perception was that the standing of architecture in the University had improved, with the result of new academic posts, readerships and staff upgrading.

In 2007/08 there were 13 permanent full-time staff and 22 staff on fractional posts. There was, in addition, a budget for 2,000 teaching hours, which is equivalent to a further four full-time equivalent posts. This gives an overall SSR for the Department of 1:19.4 which the Board noted was a rise from the previous report.

13.12 **Research**
Since the last Visiting Board the Department has been actively implementing the research strategy identified in the 2004 Report. Overall, the Board was impressed at the progress and level of research achieved. The Department had never made a return in architecture to the RAE but 16 research active staff, including part-time practitioners, had been returned for the 2008 RAE. There have been incentives to staff to undertake research and encouragement to undertake research towards PhDs.

The Department now has 11 PhD students and is offering its first post-doctoral fellowship. Research is now increasingly

under-pinning the teaching with some degree modules having research staff input. There is an ambition to develop student work for publication. Although there was still a need to broaden the research base across the full-time staff the Board felt the Department was successful in establishing its research profile.

There is an expectation that the Department that will be required to generate externally funded income.

13.13 **Equal Opportunities**

The University has a clear and well formulated policy on Equal Opportunities. The student 2007/08 statistics show a good gender balance and ethnic diversity with, in Part One 46% male and 41% white, in Part Two 52% male and 57% white and in Part Three 62% male and 53% were white.

The full-time and fractional staff of the Department are made up of 22 men and 15 women. At 40% the proportion of female staff is above the UK norm. The Department is committed to broadening the staff profile further but the ethnic make-up does not yet match that of the student body.

13.14 **Resourcing and facilities**

The Board was informed that the University was committed to investing in the Marylebone site largely to accommodate the growth in student numbers. As yet there is no University environmental strategy. However, the Department has put forward a proposal for a green roof as a design solution for the problem to the roof of the building which would also provide further accommodation.

- *Studios*

The Board found the studio accommodation to be well used, but there is great pressure on space. The growing student numbers, with 120 students in year one, the space is insufficient to accommodate current year sizes. The efficient

use of space does create its own problems, where the studios have to be used as crit spaces.

Students cited the lack of storage space for materials, work and models as a factor for not working in the studios, with another being the need for the studios to be cleared on a regular basis for crits.

- *Workshops*

Impressive workshop facilities are located in the basement of the main Marylebone building which are supervised by full-time technician staff that were helpful and enthusiastic. The workshops are well equipped offering students a range of facilities which included, CNC machine, rapid prototyping facility, vacuum forming machine for plastics, paint spray booth, clay ovens, photograph and lighting areas. Students have easy access to these during normal hours and to non-hazardous areas out of hours. These facilities provided the ability for students to explore and develop their projects in a proactive way. The Board's view was that the workshop continued to offer students excellent facilities, a view that was supported by the students.

- *IT*

The Board's view was that the IT facilities provided were excellent. The whole of ICT provision is now managed centrally by the School. Students currently benefit from free access to printers and plotters, however, the future of this facility was not guaranteed.

- *Library*

The Marylebone Campus library provides an extensive up-to-date collection of books on architecture, planning, construction and other disciplines represented in the School. In addition there is a good collection of journals.

- *P3 Exhibition Space*

The University has refurbished the former construction hall in the sub-podium levels of the Marylebone building to create the new P3 exhibition and performance space which was opened 2007 with a range of projects, working closely with the School of Media Art and Design. The P3 space maybe used for the final exhibition of student work, thus taking pressure from the studios at the end of the academic year.

The P3 programme of events provides the opportunity to bring together the cultural and commercial worlds of the creative industries. The P3 is a 1500 square metre space is seen as providing a unique addition to art spaces in London.

14 Attachments

Prior to the visit the School provided:

Critical Self-Appraisal

Responses to RIBA Questionnaire and Supplementary Information as required by the Procedures.

2007/08 BA/BSc (Hons) in Architecture and Pathways

Course Document and Handbook

2007/08 Graduate Diploma in Architecture Course

Document and Handbook

2007/08 Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Practice in architecture Course Document and Handbook

The above was available on a CD ROM

In the Base Room the Department provided:

Details of Assessment and Examinations

Academic Staff CVs

QA module boxes for Part One, Two and Three programmes

Undergraduate Prospectus 2008

Postgraduate Prospectus 2008

Research publications

Publicity material