Royal Institute of British Architects

Report of the RIBA Full visiting board to Universidad Piloto de Colombia

Date of visiting board: 5-6 September 2024
Confirmed by RIBA Education Committee: 8 January 2025

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1 **Details of institution hosting courses**
Universidad Piloto de Colombia
Facultad de Arquitectura y Artes
Cra. 9 #45A-44, Bogotá, Colombia

https://www.unipiloto.edu.co/

2 **Courses offered for validation.**
The Programme of Architecture, Part 1 and 2

3 **Head of School & Course Leads**

Dean (Head of School)
Maria Isabel Cifuentes

Course Leads
Mario Pinilla
William Blain
Sara Luciani
Diana Mora
Juan Diego Ardila
Ivonne Martinez
Natalia Correal

4 **Awarding body**
Universidad Piloto de Colombia

5 **The visiting board**
Karim Hadjri (Chair)   Academic
Lorraine Farrelly   Academic
Peter Culley   Practice
Tracy Flanagan   RIBA Validation Manager

6 **Procedures and Themes and Values for Architectural Education**
The visiting board was carried out under the RIBA Procedures for Validation and Themes and Values for UK and international courses in architecture (published September 2021, and effective from September 2022); this document is available at www.architecture.com.

7 **Proposals of the visiting board**
On 8 January 2025, the RIBA confirmed continued validation/s of the following courses:

The Programme of Architecture, Part 1 and 2

The next visit to Universidad Piloto de Colombia will take place in 2029.

8 **Standard requirements for continued recognition**
Continued RIBA recognition of all courses and qualifications is dependent upon:
i   external examiners being appointed for the course
ii   any significant changes to the courses and qualifications being submitted to the RIBA.

iii   any change of award title, and the effective date of the change, being notified to the RIBA so that its recognition may formally be transferred to the new title.

iv   submission to the RIBA of the names of students passing the courses and qualifications listed.

v   In the UK, standard requirements of validation include the completion by the of the annual statistical return issued by the RIBA Education Department

9   Academic position statement (written by the School)

Since the creation of the architecture program with the founding of the Universidad Piloto de Colombia in 1962, it has maintained its unwavering commitment to the country's development. Through its experience and knowledge, it approaches the diverse and changing landscape of education not only in Colombia but also globally. Therefore the Architecture program has been transforming in response to the new challenges that education has been demanding, demonstrating our adaptability and forward-thinking approach.
As an academic institution, we have actively participated in the updating and transformation of our program. Our commitment to the Social Construction of the Territory is a key driver in this process. The program's transformation incorporates not only the notion of social construction but also integrates aspects and topics that the profession demands today, bringing students closer to their current context.

The basis for the progress, derived from the curricular modification, reinforces and complements the academic position of the program, as evidenced by the evolution and transformation of the curricular approaches into objects of study that guide the "spatial transformation of the territory under an interdisciplinary component from the architectural, urban, 5
and social perspectives." In this way, the program proposes the following objects of study that incorporate current concepts in the context, such as understanding, interpretation, and social inclusion; environmental balance, history, theory, and criticism; and new technologies as cross-cutting themes of knowledge.

Accordingly, the program specifies the following aspects:
- The program aligns itself with climate change mitigation and supports sustainability responses.
- The Program promotes the equitable inclusion of diverse cultures, races, genders, and socioeconomic conditions—DEI—against compulsory or forced migration conflicts.
- In its tradition of social commitment, it addresses new approaches to teaching in the classroom, such as developments from social projection and research projects.

The Program promotes the everyday use of information and communication technologies towards learning, study, and knowledge acquisition.
The program strengthens critical, theoretical, and philosophical thinking through formative research and classroom investigation.

In terms of comprehensiveness and interdisciplinarity, the program has managed, through basic, professional, and complementary training, to focus on aspects of reality that are the subject of spatial transformation, focusing on architecture and the city.

To this end, the substantive functions of teaching, research, and social outreach provide the context in which the multiple interactions between professional components such as design, technology, urban planning, sustainability, and representation, and the objects of study architectural projects and works, social practices and territory, environment and sustainability, landscapes and cultures, and materials and processes take place.

In this sense, the program's purpose is to train professionals capable of understanding and spatially transforming the territory based on the study, evaluation, and interpretation of these relationships from an analytical, critical, and creative perspective.

In this way, the curricular plan proposes the social construction of the territory as an object of knowledge from the perspective of its spatial transformation, simultaneously identifying structuring themes present in the learning objects and determining the training objectives for the students. In this sense, the curriculum is structured around 6 the design project as the domain that enables spatial transformation and is enriched by the content that the professional components of technology, urban planning, sustainability, and representation contribute to the creation process.

Therefore, spatially transforming the territory involves understanding how the objects of study enable students to create, humanize, develop environmental awareness, give a sense of place, and materialize their interventions and reflections. These are framed by questions that gradually guide the academic and formative process.

On the other hand, the spatial transformation of the territory in the Architecture program links cross-cutting themes such as Sustainability and the incorporation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as inherent aspects of the discipline. This holistic approach is realized through the sustainable environment's laboratory, which transversely permeates all curriculum content and helps students engage with this new reality.

The program aligns itself to adapt to and mitigate aspects related to climate change, supporting sustainability responses within the local context. It is mindful of the diversity and variations in the biophysical and cultural characteristics of the Colombian territory.

Regarding the educational process, the curriculum incorporates disciplines common to architecture throughout the training process. In the first cycle (first and second semesters), content related to art and design is introduced, allowing students to explore their creative process. In the second cycle (Third, fourth, fifth, and sixth semesters), disciplinary aspects are introduced, enabling students to establish a theoretical foundation (environmental, urban, and architectural theories) to justify decisions based on disciplinary principles. Finally, in the last cycle (Part 2), students engage in professional practice by incorporating real-world variables related to urban management, real estate market dynamics, and innovation.

In summary, the Program educates individuals not only from the country and the Latin American region but also from around the world. It educates citizens of the planet and shapes architects who embody their integrity in design,

construction, urban consulting, technological tools assisting architecture, management, entrepreneurship, and even political, economic, or social arenas, in addition to academic pursuits.

10 Commendations

10.1 The board commends the School's academic position statement, which outlines commendable aspirations, for current and future engagement across local regional, and international settings.

10.2 The board commends the quality, clarity and breadth of the exhibition.

10.3 The board commends Piloto's sustainability certification that supports the development of sustainable designs related to real world industry standards.

11 Conditions
There are no conditions.

12 Action points

The visiting board proposes the following action points. The RIBA expects the university to report on how it will address these action points. The university is referred to the RIBA's criteria and procedures for validation for details of mid-term monitoring processes. Failure by the university to satisfactorily resolve action points may result in a course being conditioned by a future visiting board.

12.1 The course team needs to demonstrate clearly how professional practice is taught across the Part 1 course and this should be evidenced in the course mapping.

12.2 The proposed 9 semester course rationale needs to be clearly articulated and communicated to the RIBA New Course Group (NCG), to confirm the course changes and the relationship to Part 1 and Part 2 validation criteria, and to ensure the existing quality of the courses is maintained.

13 Advice
The visiting board offers the following advice to the School on desirable, but not essential improvements, which, it is felt, would assist course development and raise standards.

13.1 The board advises the course team uses the new external assessors to support the development of the course as critical professional friends and to build a more structured approach to periodic review to course content.

13.2 The board recognises the high standard of facilities available to the students and advises that the School clearly connects the use of these resources to the student learning experience so this is evidenced more clearly in the student work.

13.3 While the board appreciates the quality and diversity of the portfolios, they advise that the research and laboratory outcomes, and pedagogical aspirations, are evidenced in the design projects.

13.4 The board advises that design resolution should be clearer and more detailed in the main design workshops/studios – particularly at award levels.

13.5 The board recommends that the School establishes formal lines of communication concerning access to incubators, placements and international workshops.

13.6 Whilst the board appreciates the range of specialised lab resources, such as design, technology, sustainability, materials and the Fab-lab, they advise that a formal system of access is put in place for student inclusivity.

14 **Delivery of graduate attributes**
It should be noted that where the visiting board considered graduate attributes to have been met, no commentary is offered. Where concerns were noted (or an attribute clearly not met), commentary is supplied. Finally, where academic outcomes suggested a graduate attribute was particularly positively demonstrated, commentary is supplied.

Graduate Attributes for Part 1
The Board confirmed that all of the Part 1 graduate attributes were met by graduates of the Part 1 Programme.

Graduate Attributes for Part 2
The Board confirmed that all of the Part 2 graduate attributes were met by graduates of the Part 2 Programme.

15 It should be noted that where the visiting board considered the Themes and Values to have been met, no commentary is offered. Where concerns were noted (or a T&V were clearly not met), commentary is supplied. Finally, where academic outcomes suggested a T&V was particularly positively demonstrated, commentary is supplied.

Themes and Values for Part 1
The Board confirmed that all of the Themes and Values were met by graduates of the Part 1 Programme.

Themes and Values for Part 2
The Board confirmed that all of the Themes and Values were met by graduates of the Part 2 Programme.

16 **Other information**

The programme of architecture
Part 1 = **428**
Part 2 = **273**

16.2 **Documentation provided**
The Department provided all documentation as required by the Procedures for Validation.

17 **Notes of meetings**
On request, the RIBA will issue a copy of the minutes taken from the following meetings. These notes will not form part of the published report but will be

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made available on request. The full set of notes will be issued to the next full visiting board.

- Budget holder and course leaders
- Students
- Head of Institution
- External examiners
- Staff

Universidad Piloto de Colombia