



Royal Institute of British Architects

**Report of the RIBA Full visiting board
to Universidad Europea de Madrid**

Date of visiting board: 26-27 November 2024
Confirmed by RIBA Education: 24 March 2025

- 1 Details of institution hosting courses**
Departamento de Arquitectura
Escuela de Arquitectura, Ingeniería y Diseño
Universidad Europea de Madrid
C/ Tajo, s/n. Villaviciosa de Odón. 28670 Madrid
- 2 Courses offered for validation**
Part 1 Bachelor's Degree in Fundamentals of Architecture
Part 2 Master's Degree in Architecture
- 3 Head of School and Course Leads**
Adolfo Jordan
Head of Department

Susana Moreno
Undergraduate Coordinator

Jose Jurado
Postgraduate Coordinator

Juan Jose Mateos
Director of Masters
- 4 Awarding body**
Universidad Europea de Madrid
- 5 The visiting board**
Sara Biscaya *Chair/Academic*
Ryan Stuckey *Vice Chair/Practitioner*
Abi Van Hoorbeek *Academic*
Joshua Brooks *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 24th March 2025, the RIBA confirmed continued validation of the following course(s):

Part 1 Bachelor's Degree in Fundamentals of Architecture
Part 2 Master's Degree in Architecture

The next visit to the Universidad Europea de Madrid 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)

The Architecture Program (Bachelor's Degree in Fundamentals of Architecture + Master's Degree in Architecture) of the Universidad Europea de Madrid (UEM) enables graduates to work in any of the five profiles of an architect's work: construction, urban planning, real estate, drawing, and design; guarantees the acquirement of core, basic, state and specific competences during the studies; and covers five learning areas: art and humanities, science and technology, projects and production, management and integration.

According to Spanish law, the organization of programs leading to achieve the Degree in Architecture does not have a direct correspondence with the situation in the United Kingdom, that is, between Spanish Bachelor's Degree (5 years) and the RIBA Part 1, and Spanish Master's Degree (1 year) and the RIBA Part 2. However, the required competences for the architectural practice in Spain are achieved by the Bachelor's and the Master's Degree as a whole (5+1 years). Thus, when a graduate finishes the Master's Degree in architecture, he has acquired the RIBA Part 1 and Part 2 competences.

More specifically, the graduates' competences in the RIBA Part 1 would be achieved in the Bachelor's Degree in Fundamentals of Architecture, especially in the Design Studio Workshops, Urbanism, and Technology. The graduates' competences in the RIBA Part 2 are achieved in the subjects of the Master's Degree, such as Project (Design Studio) and Technical Project Workshops and the Master's Degree Graduation Project (See Graduate Attribute Mapping Document).

The Architecture Program (Bachelor's Degree + Master's Degree) of the UEM has differential aspects with respect to others in the Spanish and international scene, because it does not just adhere to the acquisition of competences guaranteed by law. Thus, there is an increase in credits of the integration workshops as image of our Project-Based School. These workshops allow students to link competences and skills between different knowledge areas, such as Design Project, History, Drawing, Urban Planning and Technology, helping them to enter in an actual working environment.

Bachelor's Degree Graduation Project (TFG) has 12 ECTS credits (300 hours) and his learning outcomes are: to make and conceptually orientate the scientific, economic and productive reality of contemporary society; to design and devise projects that develop all scales of the formal ideation process, satisfying a specific program and taking advantage of existing technological resources as the main tool; to demonstrate the use of plastic resources from the specific territory of Art; to know how to use technological resources for the development of architecture, at the service of its design definition; to know how to solve the spatial, formal and technological problems of the project

according to principles of rationality and sustainability; to know how to communicate and express the ideas and concepts resulting from one's own work, through appropriate discourses, contemporary languages and scales; to demonstrate the communication and expression of ideas and concepts resulting from one's work, using appropriate discourse, contemporary languages and scales.

Master's Degree Graduation Project (TFM) has 30 ECTS credits (750 hours) and his learning outcomes are: to draw up an architectural project in an integral manner, taking into account a specific programme and the conditioning factors of the site in which it is located; to understand and differentiate the functioning and development of different typologies, their relationship with each other, their social relevance and their integration with the urban context, adequately managing the requirements related to each use; to conceive, represent and visually materialise an architecture under the premises of its physical, programmatic and contextual conditioning factors, attending to the design not only of spaces and forms, but also of the technology that maintains and sustains it; to design architecture taking into account the cultural, social, environmental and temporal reality of the space in which it is located, as well as the ethical conditioning factors that affect an intervention: environmental, ethical and social responsibility; to integrate the technical knowledge acquired in previous semesters and materialise it in a project that integrates formal, technical and programmatic aspects; to specify and define the constructive development of the project at a professional level; to communicate and express the ideas and concepts resulting from one's own work, in the language of objective representation and application of the project at different scales; to communicate and express the ideas and concepts resulting from one's own work, with the appropriate means for their presentation and defence in a highly competitive market.

Another difference with other Architecture programs is the application of applied/hands-on methodologies, reinforced in all subjects, even in courses which traditionally are less inclined towards these innovative teaching formats in Spain (such as History, Construction, etc.). When teaching History of Art and Architecture, there isn't a correspondence between artistic period and year of the Degree. In other words, the contemporary age (20th and 21st Century) is studied in the first two years, while in 3th and 4th year teaching turns the eyes back and studies history since Prehistory until Modern Movement.

Our School was also one of the first to implement BIM (Building Information Modelling) methodologies in Spain. We provide specific software and classrooms to teach BIM workflows in subjects like Drawing, Construction and Facilities.

On the other hand, students that are particularly interested in Design can opt for the dual Bachelor's Degree in Fundamentals in Architecture plus Interior Design Degree, in just six years (one more than standard degree).

UEM establishes compulsory internship in all their programs, as a distinctive characteristic to other Spanish universities. Internship in Architecture comprises 12 ECTS (300 hours), defined as part time dedication so to be compatible with their ongoing studies and meanwhile take this opportunity to

work in an important architectural firm. Moreover, 82 % of teachers are active professionals in different sectors and teach on a part-time basis at the University, resulting in a continuously updated training for our students. This is reflected in a high student's satisfaction with their teachers, currently assessed 4,1 over 5, course 2023/2024.

The contribution of professionals in our Bachelor and Master Program is achieved thanks to the participation of panels of experts. The advice of the professional boards (COAM-Madrid Architects Association, and CSCAE-Spanish Chamber of Architects) are particularly relevant in the design of the curricular programs, in the same way as the School's advice is relevant to the main Architecture professional Boards and Associations. Besides, every year, we receive national and foreign guest lecturers, who teach masterclass, manage workshops or are members of juries in final degree projects of Bachelor and Master.

International perspective in Architecture UEM is based on the presence of international faculty members and exchange agreements with relevant universities around the world, where professors and students carry out periodic stays. There are international stays of professors at schools of Architecture such as the TU Delft and the Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture, among others. International workshops have been held with other foreign schools, such as the Barlett School of London (UK) or the Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas (Peru).

In addition, the guest lecturers for the 2023-24 academic year were Efrén García Grinda and Cristina Díaz Moreno, full professors at The Institute of Architecture (I oA) at the University of Applied Arts Vienna/die Angewandte. A result of these agreements and common activities is the 50% of international students in the classrooms and the possibility to study Architecture program in English.

UEM has shown a special interest to get recognition by institutions and associations with international prestige, validating and accrediting their academic programs. UEM was the first private university in Europe that obtained the substantial equivalency NAAB (The National Architectural Accrediting Board of the United States of America) in 2015 for their Architecture programs, Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree.

<https://universidadeuropea.com/en/degree-fundamentals-architecture-madrid/>

Architecture program relates with its local context, including external activities worked out with regional and city town institutions. For example, Madrid City Council has collaborated in the development of pedagogical research projects within the subjects and assigned different headquarters for activities, like Matadero Madrid (Matadero Madrid is the main municipal space for pioneering culture). School of Architecture UEM has worked also with the Official Madrid Architects Association (COAM) in different projects, like Architecture Open Week or Material Gallery MatCOAM, and sessions. We are also the creators of the COAM showcases where a sample of the students' work is exhibited in the centre of Madrid.

Our School offers specific facilities and workshops to develop its programs. Students in Architecture can use Digital Production Workshop, Material Laboratory, Tunnel of Wind, Robotic Workshop, Modelling Laboratory or Collaborative Working Room for 160 places.

Students have demonstrated their commitment with the School participating in different clubs in which they develop extracurricular activities. Cooperation Club stands out with one main action, with the structural analysis for anti-seismic earth construction system in Morocco.

Among the off-campus activities of the year, students participate in site visits and trips, as an essential training complement of the future architects. There were two main trips during the course: one of them is in the second-year trip to visit Japan and one open trip for the School students to the Biennale of Venice. And there was another that took place in the Master' Degree, with a duration of around seven days in a workshop near London (Grymsdyke farm), in collaboration with the Barlett School.

Another learning activity is the festival named Handstinking: it consists on a series of conferences and transversal workshops designed and managed by the students. Festival is subsidized by the School, lasts for one week and is in its sixth edition.

Thus, our graduates in Architecture have a good knowledge of the labor situation and the international scene. It explains the high rate of employment, at present 95%. Many alumni, even students, participate with their projects in prestigious competitions, getting awards or being finalist, like Biennial Architecture and Urbanism of Spain, European, Archiprix International, COAM Awards, and recently the RIBA Norman Foster Travelling Scholarship, where the student Santiago Fernández Pérez has been awarded, as well as the Becas Arquia 2024, one of the winners being the alumni Inéz Ruiz Alcérreca, in the academic record modality, to carry out professional internships in the prestigious studio Morphosis, Los Angeles.

10 Commendations

- 10.1** The Board commends the continued recognition of the congeniality within the student and staff environment, conducive to a positive student experience.
- 10.2** The Board commends the openness and multicultural approach in creating an inclusive and supportive community leading to a diverse body of work.

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 Board understands that the School has been through a number of staff changes in the last five years. The Board also recognises that due to the timing of the last full visit a mid-term monitoring report was not required. However, the School must ensure that the academic position statement and student appraisal reflects the unique character and ethos of the School. Both processes need to be developed in collaboration with the respective wider staff and student bodies.
- 12.2** Although there is evidence of professional studies within the portfolio at Part 1 level as per action point 12.3 of the 2019 Visiting Board Report, the School must ensure that this is explicitly evidenced to the required RIBA Themes & Values standard with regard to the Part 2 programme.
- 12.3** The School must carefully consider a more balanced sample of student work that represents both linguistic pathways in the portfolios and exhibition for the next visiting board.
- 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 that the School considers parity of communication with students, in regards to the academic year plan in support of the student community.
- 13.2** In light of the increasing student numbers, the Board advises the school to review the studio provision with regards to fostering a more collegiate studio culture and encourage peer to peer discourse and learning.
- 13.3** The Board advises that the School works more collaboratively with the external examiners and the feedback they provide in the development of the Part 1 and Part 2 programme improvement plans.
- 13.4** The Board encourages the School to clarify the feedback mechanisms available to facilitate a stronger student voice.
- 13.5** The Board encourages the School to develop a sustainable approach with regards to the dual programme, following the relocation of the interior architecture programme to the new creative campus. This should be clearly aligned with the Schools five year strategy and the architectural ethos of the programmes
- 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 Bachelor's Degree in Fundamentals of Architecture.

Graduate Attributes for Part 2

The Board confirmed that all of the Part 2 graduate attributes were met by graduates of the Part 2 - Master's Degree in Architecture.

15 Review of work against Themes and Values

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 Bachelor's Degree in Fundamentals of Architecture.

Themes and Values for Part 2

The Board confirmed that all of the Themes and Values were met by graduates of the Part 2 - Master's Degree in Architecture.

16 Other information

16.1 Student numbers (from the School - 2023/2024)

The school enrolls approximately 326 students across both years (Part 1 & 2), in English and Spanish.

Bachelor's Degree:

- Year 1: 103
- Year 2: 77
- Year 3: 40
- Year 4: 29
- Year 5: 60

Master's Degree:

- Year 1: 17

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 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