

Royal Institute of British Architects

**Report of the RIBA full visiting board to
University of Lincoln**

Date of visiting board: 23/24 February 2017
Confirmed by RIBA Education Committee: 31 May 2017

- 1** **Details of institution hosting course/s** **(report part A)**
 School of Architecture and Design
 College of Arts
 University of Lincoln
 Brayford Pool
 Lincoln
 LN6 7TS
- 2** **Head of Architecture Group**
 Professor Glen Mills
- 3** **Course/s offered for validation**
 BArch (Hons)
 M Arch
 Postgraduate Diploma in Practice and Management of Architecture, 12 months
- 4** **Course leader(s)**
 Barbara Griffin part 1
 Doina Carter part 2
 Philip Hyde part 3
- 5** **Awarding body**
 University of Lincoln
- 6** **The visiting board**
 Christian Frost academic / chair
 Jane Mcallister academic / vice chair
 Nick Humes practitioner
 Luke Murray practitioner
 Sheila Ryding co-professional
 Sophie Bailey validation manager
- 7** **Procedures and criteria for the visit**
 The visiting board was carried out under the *RIBA procedures for validation and validation criteria for UK and international courses and examinations in architecture* (published July 2011, and effective from September 2011); this document is available at www.architecture.com.
- 8** **Proposals of the visiting board**
 On the 31 May 2017 the RIBA Education Committee confirmed that the following courses and qualifications are validated unconditionally revalidated:
- BArch (Hons)**
M Arch
Postgraduate Diploma in Practice and Management of Architecture, 12 months
- The next RIBA visiting board will take place in: 2022
- 9** **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 institution of the annual statistical return issued by the RIBA Education Department

10 Academic position statement (import after visit)

Context: The University of Lincoln and its relationship with the city

The University of Lincoln is a progressive, forward-looking and dynamic international University. It continues to escalate its ranking on various university league tables by focusing on research and teaching excellence, the growth of external funding streams, and by putting students at the heart of everything it does. Its main campus is located on Brayford Pool at the heart of the thriving, cosmopolitan and friendly City of Lincoln. The Brayford campus was, in 1996, the first new city centre campus to be built in the UK for several decades. Lincoln is now a top ten institution for teaching quality, according to the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2017 and is ranked at 11th place in the UK for student satisfaction in the National Student Survey (NSS) 2016. In the Times 2017 Good University Guide we have moved from number 51 to number 18.

Overview: School of Architecture and Design

The School of Architecture and Design (SoAD) is one of five in the College of Arts and plays a dynamic role in the intellectual and cultural landscapes of the region and beyond. SoAD has a collegiate, innovative and lively atmosphere and takes pride in the quality of its teaching, research and the student experience as a whole.

In addition to our degree programmes in Architecture SoAD offers undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in the following areas of study: Graphic Design; Illustration; Interactive Design; Creative Advertising; Design for Exhibitions and Museums; Interior Architecture and Design; Product Design.

The Architecture provision (from here on referred to as the 'School') offers a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes with dedicated studios, classrooms, laboratories and workshops that strengthen our culture of design and research. These programmes include the Bachelor of Architecture (Honours) (Part 1), Master of Architecture (Part 2) and Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Practice and Management (Part 3). In addition, we offer the MArch (Global Practice), MPhil and PhD degrees in architecture.

Our programmes equip architecture students with the understanding and skills they need to operate effectively within a globalised, innovation-driven context of integrated professional practice. Architecture graduates are therefore prepared for practice in a globalised profession that designs and delivers

projects through teamwork and collaboration with others in the built environment professions. The degree programmes achieve this by keeping up-to-date with current trends and developments in practice, utilising both traditional methods and digital technologies.

The School has excellent results in the National Student Survey (NSS). For example, in 2016, we moved from number 47 to number 3 on the average of all questions in the NSS. The School obtained the 2nd place in Module Evaluation exercise in 2016/17 across the University.

Identity

The ethos of the School rests on the necessity to create tomorrow's buildings and cities that are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. Studio assignments and research projects therefore address design challenges in national and international contexts.

This ethos is further shaped by an integrated approach to the teaching of design, technology and the humanities. In this regard technology and the humanities, seen together, provide a platform for the creation of socially responsible architecture.

Teaching and Learning

The School continues its tradition of adopting a progressive stance in the delivery of architectural education by maintaining and developing studio-led, project-based teaching and emphasising learning through experimentation. This approach has been developed and refined over the last few decades so that it now combines the best aspects of year-based, studio organisation and small-group teaching.

The semi-autonomous studios allow the philosophy and ethos of the School to evolve organically whilst safeguarding standards and coverage of criteria through inter-studio assessment processes. The majority of assessment in all areas of the curriculum is through studio work, essay assignments and dissertations, with the exception of some professional practice examinations and written projects that are run in parallel with studio modules.

Curriculum

The School sees challenges facing architecture and its education as a complex context for forging new directions in the curriculum. For example, there already exists a strong research background within the School for addressing strategic sustainability issues. The School has recently implemented changes that are impacting the whole curriculum to reflect new realities of practice. These include the appointment of new staff with specialist knowledge in Digital Architecture and BIM, Construction Technology and Sustainable Construction. These have enhanced the curriculum both theoretically and technically. The School is determined to maintain a strong emphasis on design-centred approaches to teaching, but with the added advantage of emphasising integrated project delivery learning.

Employability

Our aim is to nurture graduates who are confident, self-reliant and who have empathy. The School therefore educates graduates for practice who will make

a difference in society and the economy. This is consistent with the University's Vision, which is to be "recognised internationally as having a distinctive reputation for a strong ethos of partnership with employers and students and for providing a research engaged academic experience which has a personal student experience at its heart".

Research

The University is a research-intensive institution and staff and students are expected to carry out high impact research for the benefit of society. Although research-engaged teaching, whereby students create and develop new knowledge in collaboration with their tutors, has been fundamental to the School's approach for some considerable time, this philosophy has now been incorporated into the University's "Student as Producer" initiative.

Resources

Teaching and research are effectively facilitated by a broad array of physical and electronic resources. These include IT or wireless provisions in all studios, state-of-the art workshops, a substantial CAD and 3-D printing facility in the School, and extensive library holdings.

11 Commendations

The visiting board made the following commendations:

- 11.1 The board commends the BArch and MArch programme leaders for their commitment to the coordination of the teaching programmes and their support of the students
- 11.2 The board commends the facilities open to the school, particularly the range of workshops with their enthusiastic technicians and the library with its architecture subject librarian

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. Failure by the university to satisfactorily resolve action points may result in a course being conditioned by a future visiting board.

- 12.1 In order to clearly evidence that all students meet all the criteria the school should develop greater consistency of course documentation
- 12.2 Marking sheets should use clear assessment criteria that are underpinned by the learning outcomes to assist in moderation and to avoid over marking
- 12.3 On the BArch and MArch programmes the students should more clearly evidence:
 - greater levels of tectonic understanding (GC8.1)
 - a clearer understanding of material characteristics as well as material properties (GC8.3)
 - how design development is achieved through iterative processes (GA1.4, GA2.1 &2)
 - a critical use of appropriate precedents within the design process (GC7.1)
 - a clearer understanding of context at a range of scales (GC1.1, GC5.3)

- 12.4 In accordance with **GC2 and GC3** the school should develop strategies to increase the knowledge of humanities as a stand-alone subject in addition to its application in design projects

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 strongly advises that the school reconsiders the use of one-tutor studios
- 13.2 All three accredited courses should engage in greater critical discourse nationally and internationally (including visits to other architectural schools, buildings and exhibitions)
- 13.3 The board advises the students and staff to make more use of the workshops in meeting action point 12.3 above

14 Delivery of academic position

The following key points were noted:

The board felt that the Academic Position Statement appeared a little disjointed, and didn't really give a clear picture of the identity of the school. The school would benefit from redrafting the statement to more accurately reflect the direction of travel of the School (in terms of arts & design versus construction and technology). **Note:** *This has since been revised and is inserted above.*

15 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 Parts 1 and 2

Please see action point 12.3

16 Review of work against criteria

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

Graduate Criteria for Parts 1 and 2

Please see action point 12.3 and 12.4

17 Other information

18.1 Student numbers

BArch (Hons): 173

MArch: 74

Part 3: 22

Notes of meetings

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On request, the RIBA will issue a copy of the minutes taken from the following meetings:

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