Royal Institute of British Architects

Report of the RIBA revisiting board to the University of Cambridge

Part 2 MPhil in Architecture and Urban Design

Date of visiting board: 30 October 2015
Confirmed by RIBA Education Committee: 3 February 2016
1 **Details of institution hosting course/s** (report part A)
Department of Architecture  
University of Cambridge  
Scroope Terrace  
Cambridge  
CB2 1PX

2 **Head of Architecture**  
Dr Wendy Pullan

3 **Course/s offered for revalidation**  
Part 2 MPhil in Architecture and Urban Design

4 **Course leader/s**  
Ingrid Schroder - Part 2

5 **Awarding body**  
University of Cambridge

6 **The visiting board**  
Lorraine Farrelly  
Chair  
Kathy Gal  
Vice Chair  
Ivana Wingham  

Sophie Bailey  
RIBA 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, second revision 2014); this document is available at [www.architecture.com](http://www.architecture.com).

8 **Proposals of the visiting board**  
8.1 On the 3 February 2016 the RIBA Education Committee confirmed that the following courses and qualifications are unconditionally revalidated

**Part 2 MPhil in Architecture and Urban Design**

The next full Visiting Board to the University of Cambridge will take place in 2019.

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
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
For academic position statement see RIBA full visiting report dated: 12/13 November 2014.

11 Commendations
The visiting board made the following commendations:

11.1 The course offers students opportunities to share a broad set of practice experience to complement the core curricula related to Management Practice and Law.

12 Conditions
There are no conditions

Please see below for the revisiting Board’s response to 2014’s conditions:

12.1 The course did not meet the following criteria for validation:

GC 10.1, 10.2, 10.3
GC11.1, GC 11.3

The Part 2 course MPhil in Architecture and Urban Design (MAUD) must be mapped to demonstrate that it successfully meets validation criteria and this must be adequately evidenced in the work.

2015 Board commentary:
The course now meets the criteria GC 10.1, 10.2, 10.3 GC11.1, GC 11.3

12.2 The board appreciated the measures that the School had put in place to address the conditions applied to the M Phil in Architecture and Urban design at the visit of November 2014, in particular a clear strategy across a range of course components from workshops to essays to individual student reports.

12.3 The board appreciated the coordinated response that the School had to the visit involving the Head of School, course leader, course contributors, and inviting past and present cohorts of students and the external examiner to the discussions with the panel.

12.4 The 5 point plan proposed in the School's response to the conditions for the 2013 – 15 cohort related to:

I. Clarification of Essay 5 - the Project Implementation essay (GC 11.1)
Progress and evaluation supervision of drafts of essay 5

Comment
This could be more explicit – not all students are fully covering all aspects of GC 11.1 in Essay 5.
II. Recalls - day long workshops to focus on Management Practice and Law
Seven part management practice law in Easter 2015 (GC 10.1, GC 11.1)
Comment
Workshop content: There appears to be no workshop theme covering costs and cost control, mechanisms and operation. Practice workshop - aspects that are not explicitly covered: role of profession and roles of architects and their duties and responsibilities to clients and others, delivery of architect services, basic management and business issues of architects practices, issues of brief preparation and the relevance of architects and others to brief formulation.

The involvement of the Part 3 Course director in the future content and delivery of the workshops will be beneficial for the development and coverage of the appropriate content of Management Practice and Law in the course to ensure that all aspects of these criteria are covered.

III. Individual student mapping of RIBA criteria (GC 10.1 GC 10.2, GC 10.3, GC 11.1, GC 11.3)
Comment
There is an attempt to cover the criteria in the students individual response and mapping, however it is developmental, and the place of this in the course, the timing and the scope of all these responses are variable from student to student experience. These criteria are evidenced in a number of submissions of the course including essays, log books and portfolios. If there are omissions in this individual response there needs to be a mechanism to cover any students who have gaps in their overall coverage of the criteria. These points may be picked up in a subsequent individual tutorial which should be appropriately programmed within the Part 2 course to allow these issues to be adequately addressed.

IV. Project report as part of the Design thesis (GC 10.3)
Comment
From the samples presented the students responded to this in a variety of ways which would be expected at this Masters level of study.

V. Increase of Technical supervision with consultants (GC 10.1, GC 10.2)
Comment
Criteria 10.2 needs strengthening in terms of evidence in the main thesis project.
13 Additional comments:

13.1 The panel welcomes the appointment of 2 new external examiners to cover Professional Practice and Academic aspects of the course. This reflects the ambition of the course to work between practice and academia.

13.2 The panel welcomes the involvement of the Part 3 course leader to support the content of the workshops in the Part 2 course to address Management Practice Law so there is appropriate and relevant content.

13.3 The core curricula of the Management Practice Law criteria 10.1, 10.2, and 10.3 and 11.1 and 11.3 could be covered in the workshops and this could then be easily evidenced to future validation boards.

13.4 The mapping of the course against the validation criteria is developing as the course evolves. It may be easier to try to identify which are the core curricula that are part of all students experience and what can be considered as the range of student experience. This is to identify the difference between what is formally taught and assessed and what is more informally or broadly covered. This may be part of a more uniform consideration of mapping across all Part 1, 2 and 3 of the course.

*Notes of meetings
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