Royal Institute of British Architects

Report of the RIBA visiting board
to the Mackintosh School of Architecture

Date of visiting board: 7/8 November 2013
Confirmed by RIBA Education Committee: 2 June 2014
1 Details of institution hosting courses
The Mackintosh School of Architecture
167 Renfrew Street
Glasgow G3 6RQ
Scotland

2 Head of School
Professor Christopher Platt

Deputy Head of School
Sally Stewart

3 Course leaders
Alan Hooper - Undergraduate Programme Leader
Jo Crotch - Diploma/Postgraduate Programme Leader

4 Courses offered for revalidation
- Bachelor of Architecture 3 years full-time, 4 years part time, Part 1
- Bachelor of Architecture (Honours) 4 years full time, Part 1 achieved at year 3
- Diploma in Architecture (comprising the 4th year of the Mackintosh BA (Hons) Architecture plus the single Diploma year, or two years full-time for Part 1 graduates of other institutions, or three years part-time), Part 2

5 Awarding body
University of Glasgow

6 The visiting board
Professor Jim Low – chair/ academic
Lilly Kudic - vice chair/ academic
Satwinder Samra - academic
Gill Lambert- practitioner
Andy Usher- practitioner
Dr Nicholas Humes- student/graduate
Sheila Ryding- co-professional
Gordon Smith- regional representative

Jenna Quinn (RIBA) attended as secretary

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
The RIBA Education Committee confirmed continued validation of:

- Bachelor of Architecture, Part 1
- Bachelor of Architecture (Honours), Part 1 achieved at year 3
- Diploma in Architecture, Part 2
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

10 School’s academic position statement (written by the School)

The Mackintosh School of Architecture:
The School of 21st Century Architectural Design, Research and Practice

The Mackintosh School of Architecture is unique in the UK. Throughout a 40 year period under three previous successive Heads, it has maintained an impressive and consistent output and reputation. This is due to the collective purpose and quality of its staff as well as a shared ethos focussed on the art and craft of contemporary architecture. The Mac has not lurched from one vision to another, nor has it stagnated. In this respect, it could be described a mature school of architecture. Its intellectual conviction gives it a secure position from which to address a changing landscape of external forces in agile and innovative ways. The Mac travels on a road built by emeritus Professor Andy MacMillan and Isi Metzstein, but a road which can also be seen as a runway; a place of take-off. Since my arrival as Head and Professor of Architecture two years ago, we have been developing the next stage of the Mac’s evolution by ‘deepening the roots’ of that core ethos as well as ‘extending the branches’ into new territories. Those roots are our continued passion for the design of meaningful and aesthetically challenging buildings, towns and cities. Those branches are new cross-disciplinary collaborations and methodologies, new tools and roles within the built environment and construction industry, new modes of learning pathways, and an accelerated and broadened international agenda in the Global North and Global South.

At the core of the educational experience at the Mac is the rich mix of staff and facilities in our studios and workshops. It is a holistic learning experience. Studio, at the Mac is understood as both a physical place and a mode of working. Every student has a dedicated workspace within a large studio where other years are also seamlessly located. Peer learning underpins this experience and ‘thinking and making’ characterizes the activities. Where the link between the Profession and the Academy is strong and town and gown are close, we believe the quality and intelligence of the built environment is higher. Our studio tutors subsequently work and in some cases lead practices or research groups of national and international significance. This lends our design studios a rigorous yet intellectually porous flavour. Our studios are also central to defining and delivering learning and teaching and establishing a collaborative and integrative practice. Studio as both place and activity is increasingly rare in the UK but is something we share with our sister schools within GSA where it is valued and celebrated.

The Mac uses its validated Part1 (years 1-3) and Part 2 (years 4-5) programmes to develop the role of the architect from place-maker to thought-leader.
• Years 1-3 focus on architecture as a place-making response to human need and activity.
• Years 4-5 focus on architecture belonging to the cultural and ethical domains, particularly within the urban condition.
• Year 5 is seen as the final stage of formal education as well as the first year of independent practice implicitly asking the question: ‘what kind of architect do I want to be?’

There are 5 meta themes across the design studios which inform MSA’s 5 year architectural narrative:
Stage 1: PLACE
Stage 2: COMMUNITY
Stage 3: INSTITUTION
Stage 4: METROPOLIS
Stage 5: FIELD WORK

Throughout those 5 years, the role and relevance of the architect and architectural design at the beginning of the 21st century is explored through the act and art of drawing, modeling and model-making. There is a passion for traditional and digital techniques; physical and screen-based outputs where the workshop is seen as an extension of the studio.

Years 1-3 Part 1
• Experience and Quality in the Built Environment.
  1. Small scale Scottish locations are used where engagement with existing community groups is possible and project outcomes can be disseminated locally.
  2. In a skills-depleted construction industry what does 21st century craft mean? The ‘haptic realm’ is explored through full size build projects introducing students to the tactile and tectonic qualities of physical material and detail.
  3. Terms of engagement: the architect as urban tactician as well as a form and place maker is interrogated where a building is seen as a detail in a specific settlement, e.g. stage 3 has set all its projects in Dunoon working with John McAslan.
• Innovation in Technology, Regeneration and Design Practice.
  1. The teaching of technology and studio is an integrated practice resulting in a deep understanding of principles and the application of theory in practice. The relationship between design and technology staff is a collaborative one where the core teaching team includes the MEARU research group supported by visiting lecturers from practice.
  2. Concepts of longevity and building performance define sustainability at the Mac where the study of history as well as technology play a role.
  3. The crucial inter-disciplinary chemistry in the design team is acted out in real time in the long-standing ‘Interact’ project ins stage 3 where architecture, engineering and quantity surveying students collaborate on a studio project and present their findings to the professional institutes.

Years 4-5 Part 2
• Healthy Cities in the Global North and Global South.
  1. The city of Glasgow has long been used at the Mac as a laboratory to examine the nature and future of the historic European post-industrial city. The history and urban studies research group, HAUS provides the historical and social
perspective through lecture programmes. The theme of 21st century cities is explored in seminars led by the Head of Urbanism who also heads the research group, Glasgow Urban Lab.

2. Adapting the historic European City is the focus of stage 5’s student-initiated agenda, where a choice of mainland European cities is offered. One city is the setting for an annual collaborative design studio with 5 other European partner institutions, the results of which are disseminated publicly by students in book and exhibition format. Studio tutors are active in the research cluster PRAXIS.

3. The Global South is recent territory for the Mac, initiated last year with a full size live build project in Accra, Ghana and supported by a new member of staff with specific experience in this field. This draws together themes of sustainable development, the role of the architect, community and cross-cultural engagement, innovation in self-build and construction along with political/ethical/architectural activism. It will broaden the frame of reference for a student generation which is already digitally switched on, internationally aware, has developed a moral compass and which will define itself within a profession across both the Global North and Global South.

- The Porous Academy and Internationalism
  Developing student confidence and encouraging greater independence is an integral characteristic of the Part 2 experience. Opportunities to develop further important contemporary skills in collaboration, publishing, public engagement, communication, management, marketing and entrepreneurship characterize a growing number of live projects with non-academic partners, located in the stage 4 research project including this year:
  1. KOG (Kick off in Ghana) full size build (projected site start summer 2014).
  2. MSA Publications: books exploring the construction of the new Steven Holl Building and the international collaborative studio project.
  3. MSA Exhibitions: curating, documenting and staging an annual public exhibition, e.g. Steven Holl, Sutherland Hussey, 2014.
  4. MacMag cultural document, now in its 39th year.
  5. MSA Guest Lectures: selecting, inviting, organizing and interviewing a coherent series of high-profile guest speakers.

11 Commendations
The visiting board made the following commendations:

11.1 The school’s international reputation.
11.2 The articulate and passionate student body.
11.3 Every student has a permanent place in the studio which maintains the long established studio culture.
11.4 The board observes the strong tradition of model making together with the importance of the workshops. It is essential that this provision is maintained and developed through the transition to the new GSA building.

12 Conditions
There are no conditions.

13 Action points
13.1 As advised by the visiting board of 2009, and reinforced by the present board’s conversation with external examiners, the school should enable greater experimentation and intellectual speculation on the processes and theories of design in the final year of Part 2.
13.2 At Part 1 the school should ensure a greater scale of ambition with further spatial and typological complexity.

13.3 Students should be encouraged to explore and apply the full range of communication and presentation techniques that are available to contemporary and future practice.

14. **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.

14.1 At Part 2 the board encourages design projects to have a greater scale of ambition. In particular more intellectual, spatial and typological complexity.

14.2 The school should develop rigorous methodologies to understand and explain the relationship between learning outcomes, assessment criteria and the RIBA/ARB criteria. This will help provide a clearer framework for developing the student work.

14.3 The board was encouraged by the intention to further enhance and support the provision of professional practice. A strategy should be evolved to ensure all staff are supported to deliver current and future workloads.

14.4 The board welcomes the staff’s pedagogical research into student feedback, and looks forward to seeing its implementation at the RIBA mid-term review.

14.5 The board agrees with the external examiners’ observation that the school should be encouraged to utilise the full range of marks.

14.6 Staff should encourage and support more able students to excel and demonstrate excellence in their design project work at all levels.

15 **Meetings**

15.1 **Meeting with budget holder**

The board held a meeting with the current Head of School, Deputy Head of School and Course Leaders for Part 1 and Part 2. The following key points were discussed:

The ethos of the school:

- The board was informed that the school had held several staff away days to discuss the academic position statement. The final statement describes the reality of the school’s current position and their aspirations for the future.
- The tradition of the school is clearly embedded in the art and craft of architecture; there is a strong motivation to make and build.
- Many students choose to study at MSA because of its art school context. The school is celebrated as a small and specialist arts based institution.
- Consistency and diversity are key themes in the school.
- MSA students are independent, enquiring, reflective and globally aware.
- The school is passionate about providing a studio centred education. The lively studio culture and dedicated studio space permeate the school and encourage collaborations and team working.
- Every student has a dedicated workspace in the studio which is considered unique for a school of architecture.
- The school is developing architects as place makers and thought leaders. Graduates are given the appropriate tools to survive in an evolving and changing architectural profession.
Developments since the last visiting board (2009):

- There have been substantial changes in staffing and a new Head of School was appointed in 2010. The new Head has aims to refresh and energise the core ethos of the school.

- MSA has a genuine desire for collaborative working. A major change has been the establishment of collaborations with other disciplines within Glasgow School of Art.

- It has been a challenging process to timetable cross-school projects, however, it is now possible for students to undertake a postgraduate elective in year 5. This has enabled students to specialise and collaborate with other disciplines at Diploma level.

- The Erasmus exchange system was radically restructured in 2012/13. This has doubled the number of students participating in overseas exchanges. Students and staff were involved in the restructuring process.

- The teaching of technology is more dispersed and integrated. This is particularly evident at Part 2, and Stage 5 students are now given the opportunity to explore a particular element of technology. A visiting professor of sustainability was appointed, and practising architects are teaching technology in the studio.

- Members of staff are more engaged in research and studio teaching. Two research assistants are currently being supported by research funds. All staff are offered access to support, funding and research leave. The school is collaborating with other institutions in Scotland on research projects.

- In year 5 the thesis is used as an opportunity for students to define their own approach to architecture. Research becomes the driving force behind projects at Part 2.

- Fifth year students have the opportunity to develop and construct their own brief with clients and sites which enables them to establish their own values and interests through experimentation and explorations.

Future challenges:

- The senior staff team will discuss and consider the review of the structure of architectural education and alternative pathways to the profession.

- The school will focus on strengthening the architectural ethos of GSA with a particular focus on exploring different approaches to how students can qualify as practitioners.

- Following the migration of the workshops to the new Reid Building the team will consider how to utilise the ‘released’ space in the basement of the Bourdon building.

- The school has aims to recruit a diverse portfolio of students; however the staff team is mindful of student debt and the need for students to gain relevant experience in practice over the five years. International students are still experiencing issues with securing Tier 4 visas that cover the year out after stage 3 in Scotland. Both staff and students would strongly support a review of the one year-out regulation with a view to increasing the time period to two years in Scotland.

15.2 Meeting with students

The board met a large group of approximately 65 students representing all years of the Part 1 and Part 2 programmes and year-out students. The board noted that no part-time students were present for the discussion. The majority of students were aware of the student course appraisal sent to the Board before the visit, and which formed the
Students identified the following strengths of the school:
- The studio environment and layout; every student has a desk space.
- The studio mentality encourages students to collaborate and share ideas.
- GSA acts as a small environment of artists.
- The school’s ethos is engrafted in locality; many of the projects are local and give a new perspective on the city. Design projects are aspirational.
- Tutors are strongly committed to the school and the delivery of the programmes.
- The school offers a broad foundation of study at undergraduate level which moves to more focussed study at postgraduate level. This enables students to become more independent in their learning.

Preparation for professional practice:
- Professional studies lectures are delivered in the third year of Part 1. Some students considered that the year is over-loaded with management practice and law. They advised that the school should consider introducing MPL at an earlier stage in the programme. Part 2 students considered professional practice is very useful in year 5.
- The Interact Project introduces students to aspects of people management, and provides an opportunity to work with the engineering students. Students expressed mixed feelings regarding the success of the project, and some reported that it depended on their individual experience of the group that they worked with.
- Year-out students reported that they had to self-teach digital technologies in order to feel confident and useful in practice. A number of students considered that there is a resistance from tutors to use digital tools in the school.
- Students would encourage the school to introduce drop-in workshops for digital programmes which would help prepare them better for practice. These could be given a credit weighting.

Among areas for development suggested by students were the following:
- The School would benefit from establishing a stronger relationship with Glasgow University. This could improve student access to the library and sports facilities.
- Clearer information should be given on the structure of the course in terms of the Scottish honours model and RIBA validation exit points at Part 1 and Part 2. It would be helpful if the School explained the differences between the two models before students apply to the programme; this would be of particular benefit to overseas students.
- The level of permanent staffing appears to have been reduced on the programme. Students had concerns that tutors were already stretched by the increasing number of students enrolled on the programme.
- Some students considered that the school does not make use of the full range of grades. The benchmark is set very high, which can appear unachievable to students.
- Students had concerns regarding the new building and the relocation of facilities. Although students acknowledged that the relocation of workshops to the Reid Building would enhance symbiosis, they expressed serious concern over how the space will be utilised by other disciplines (with different working methods) and the access times for architecture students.
Students were disappointed that they had not been involved in discussions regarding the basement space in the current Bourdon Building. This space will become vacant once the workshops have been relocated to the new building. Students advised that the space could be used for model storage and assembly.

Feedback and timetabling were raised as issues. Students advised that the feedback process should be standardised throughout the school. Some reported that the amount of feedback a student receives depends on their individual tutor. Students would also like to receive further guidance on the marking process and the reasons behind why a particular grade is given.

Students reported that some members of staff actively use the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) system whilst others use it less frequently. Tutors are inconsistent in their use of VLE and feedback sheets are not always posted on the system. It was acknowledged that lecture notes are uploaded on a regular basis.

15.3 Meeting with the head of institution
The board held a meeting with the Director and Deputy Director of GSA. The board was informed that the Director had been in post for 7 weeks at the time of the RIBA visit. The following reflects the key points of discussion:

- Glasgow School of Art has a strong ethos and commitment to studio-based teaching.
- The school has iconic significance as the only visual arts school in Scotland and as an entity can operate in any environment. Architecture is uniquely situated within a studio based art and design institution in the midst of a rapidly developing art scene in Glasgow.
- The University is investing in the new Reid Building and establishing future plans for the Bourdon Building. The shared resources in the new building will encourage students to collaborate with other disciplines such as Fine Art and Sculpture.
- The University is using the staffing budget strategically, and has plans to strengthen both academic and practice-based staffing. Career development and staff progression will become more fluid. Staff would benefit from being given clarity over their activity and the expectations of the Institution. This is particularly important for fractional members of staff in the school.
- Architecture is embracing an international dimension; the school has aspirations to become a global leader in studio based education and research. MSA intends to introduce studio based learning and teaching to new audiences.
- The University will focus on establishing the identity of the graduate school. The school is developing practice-based research and is linked into the architectural profession. PhD activity in architecture was recently established.
- The University is exploring different ways of connecting the undergraduate and post graduate programme’s teaching and research. The school is collaborating with other disciplines and efforts are being made to link research themes across GSA and to focus on themes that sit beyond discipline specific areas.
- The Director discussed the importance of schools understanding that operating contexts change quickly in creative practices. The role of the architect is changing on a global basis, and the school must consider how its ethos will evolve with these changes.

15.4 Meeting with external examiners
The board held a meeting with a large group of external examiners responsible for Part 1 and Part 2 courses. The external examiners expressed a high level of support
for the school and the programmes. The following reflects the key points of discussion:

- The school’s ethos is about making architecture, and graduates honour the tradition of making buildings for different cultures and contexts. Students are particularly strong in technical making and making spaces for people.
- The school gives a robust, enduring and consistent education. The conformist culture is respected by examiners and produces confident and competent graduates.
- MSA produces architects who are capable of leading discussions at design team level. Students are immensely capable, articulate and ordered.
- The school has a strong structured approach to working and this manner is carried through the five years of the programme.
- The character of the school is driven by the strong team of staff underpinning the programmes. They have an intuitive sense of what architecture is about.
- Students are expanding their understanding of society, and working with communities outside of Glasgow.
- The Interact Project gives students confidence to work in a built environment team. The projects can sometimes take different directions; however examiners considered they are very useful for students.
- The School has formed strong international and European connections through the Erasmus exchange scheme.
- MSA is not remote, and the relationship between the school and the city is a strength. Many part-time students are working in in the local area which is important for the programme as many of the projects are rooted in particular problems of the city. Students understand materials, how to look at buildings and the different ways people inhabit spaces.
- The school has introduced a technology study to year 5 of the Part 2 programme which examiners considered a good improvement.

Among areas suggested for development by external examiners were the following:

- The school should make use of external examiners more strategically.
- There needs to be a stronger intellectual debate in the school about its ethos and how this should evolve.
- There should be more communication between the MSA and Glasgow University.
- The discipline of the school is well engrained and this is challenging for the small number of students who work outside of the culture of MSA. They should be encouraged to push the boundaries within the strong ethos.
- The traditional aspects of the course are very strong; however there should be more flexibility for students to find their own position through innovation and experimentation.
- In year 5 there is no prescribed scale for projects which offers an opportunity for students to be far ranging and experimental. Examiners reported that they are yet to see this happen in the school.
- The structure and system of the programme provides a wonderful framework for the majority of students to progress through Part 1 and Part 2, however, the school should encourage students to be more speculative.
- The time management skills of students could be strengthened. A number of students spend too much time establishing the contextual information, using the research phase as a way to avoid progressing to the design phase.
15.5 Meeting with staff
The board held a meeting with approximately 50 members of staff representative of full-time, part-time and fractional positions. The following reflects the key points of discussion:

Strengths of the school:
- The foundations of the school are strong. MSA is viewed as a school with a tradition, and this attracts many students to the programme. There is flexibility within the tradition for students to move forwards and evolve with professional practice.
- Staff considered that they are all actively involved in the delivery of the school’s ethos. The ethos is engrained in the studio culture. The dedicated studios are inhabited by students and staff 4-5 days of the week.
- Graduates are practical, and well trained in making buildings. They are held in high esteem by employers.
- The strong studio culture encourages diversity of thinking and independence of thought. The environment enables students to share knowledge and learn from their peers.

Developments since the last visiting board (2009):
- There have been a number of changes at senior management level in GSA. The appointment of the new Head of School has helped to expand the schools profile in the public and international domains.
- The new Director of GSA has an academic and design background. Staff anticipate that this will generate many changes within the Institution.
- MSA is unique in that the Head of School is both a practising architect and an academic. Staff described the Head as approachable and very visible to both students and the staff team.
- The Head of School is boosting the research basis of the school which is attracting part-time staff.
- The school has evolved and different themes are emerging from the diverse range of projects in the studio.
- At Part 2 the design briefs develop in their complexity. Students take ownership of the brief and choose their own site which helps them to become independent learners. Some students could develop the brief further.
- Student numbers have grown significantly, and members of staff are reconsidering how they deploy their time. Each year has a stage leader who is supported by a team of part-time staff and a co-pilot. The appointment of co-pilots has helped to balance the workload in terms of sharing pastoral care support.
- The shared offices enable staff to have conversations and exchange ideas on a constant basis. The degree show is a good opportunity for full and part-time staff to meet informally and discuss the work.
- Part-time members of staff invite clients to give lectures and participate in reviews. The school benefits from the local practices who contribute to the programme.
- The multiple roles of various members of staff enable interactions across the team. Connections are also being formed through research collaborations.

Challenges:
- MSA has a strong ethos and it will be challenging for staff to take the school forwards in a new direction.
- Staff reported that MSA being a small institution has some disadvantages. The high level of administration is a burden and staff are pushed beyond their limitations.
- The course team is re-evaluating the feedback process with the aim to ensure that feedback is given equally and equitably. In terms of resourcing, feedback is strained with the increase in student numbers. Some members of staff feel overstretched.
- Students have expressed anxieties over funding issues. Some do not fully understand the trajectory of the five years of study at MSA and the number of years they can take out in practice. The differences between the English and Scottish student finance systems are explained to students during the induction.

16 Delivery of academic position
The following key points were noted:

The Board acknowledged that the visiting board took place at a time of significant change for the school in both physical premises and staffing; however, it considered that the school’s strong traditional approach to architecture through making and craft was not fully expressed in the academic position statement.

17 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.

Bachelor of Architecture, Part 1
Bachelor of Architecture (Honours), Part 1 achieved at year 3

GA1.2 ability to apply a range of communication methods and media to present design proposals clearly and effectively;

The School is referred to action point 13.3.

Diploma in Architecture, Part 2

GA2.1 ability to generate complex design proposals showing understanding of current architectural issues, originality in the application of subject knowledge and, where appropriate, to test new hypotheses and speculations

The School is referred to action point 13.1.

GA2.2 ability to evaluate and apply a comprehensive range of visual, oral and written media to test, analyse, critically appraise and explain design proposals

The School is referred to action point 13.1.

18 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.

**Bachelor of Architecture, Part 1**
**Bachelor of Architecture (Honours), Part 1 achieved at year 3**

*GC1 Ability to create architectural designs that satisfy both aesthetic and technical requirements*

1. prepare and present building design projects of diverse scale, complexity, and type in a variety of contexts, using a range of media, and in response to a brief;

The School is referred to action point 13.2.

*GC7 Understanding of the methods of investigation and preparation of the brief for a design project*

2. the need to appraise and prepare building briefs of diverse scales and types, to define client and user requirements and their appropriateness to site and context;

The School is referred to action point 13.3

**Diploma in Architecture, Part 2**

*GC1 Ability to create architectural designs that satisfy both aesthetic and technical requirements*

1. prepare and present building design projects of diverse scale, complexity, and type in a variety of contexts, using a range of media, and in response to a brief;

The School is referred to advice 14.1.

19 **Other information**

**Resources**

**Studios**
The board was impressed by the studio space and environment. The flexible studio space enables interaction between year groups. Every student has a permanent place in the studio which maintains the long established studio culture.

**Workshops**
The workshops will be migrated to a new shared facility in the Reid Building. Students informed the board that they were keen to be involved in discussions regarding how the vacant space in the Bourdon building will be used. They advised that the space could be used for model making and assembly. Students also expressed concerns about the changes to workshop access hours in the new building, and were anxious to receive more information regarding how the shared space will be used by other disciplines.

Students spoke highly of the induction office, advisors and specialist support staff in the workshop.
Library
Architecture has a dedicated Academic Liaison Librarian who is responsible for taking book requests from staff and students. The library offers an excellent architectural provision, which includes an impressive range of magazines and print/electronic journals.

IT facilities
Studios are equipped with PCs, scanners, and printers. There are six colour printers which are spread across various locations in the building. Students reported that they use external printer companies during busy periods. The board considered the range of software available in the school is appropriate. Students frequently use the Technical Base which houses a range of digital equipment, and staff are available to offer expertise and give training.

Students spoke highly of the photographic suite, and reported that assistants are available to offer help and support.

19.1 Documentation provided
The School provided all advance documentation in accordance with the validation procedures.