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**Royal Institute of British Architects**

**Report of the RIBA visiting board to**

**Confluence Institute for Innovation and  
Creative Strategies in Architecture**

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- 1**     **Details of institution hosting course/s** **(report part A)**  
 Confluence Institute for Innovation and Creative Strategies in  
 Architecture  
 23 Rue Paul Montrochet  
 69002 Lyon  
 France
- 2**     **President**  
 Odile Decq
- Academic Advisor**  
 Nicolas Hannequin
- 3**     **Course/s offered for validation**  
 Architecture Confluence Degree level A  
 Architecture Confluence Degree level B
- 4**     **Awarding body**  
 The Confluence Institute
- 5**     **The visiting board**  
 Sally Stewart                chair / academic  
 Peter Williams             practitioner  
 Nic Clear                     academic  
 Albert Dubler                Regional Representative  
 Sophie Bailey                Validation Manager
- 6**     **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](http://www.architecture.com).
- 7**     **Recommendation of the Visiting Board**  
 On Friday 01 June 2018 the RIBA Education Committee confirmed that the following courses and qualifications are unconditionally validated:
- RIBA Part 1    Architecture Confluence Degree level A**  
**RIBA Part 2    Architecture Confluence Degree level B**
- The next RIBA visiting board will take place in: 2023
- 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 institution of the annual statistical return issued by the RIBA Education Department

**9 Academic position statement**

In a world where all productions are tending inexorably towards homogenization, disregarding every cultural, historic and social distinctiveness, architecture is too often compromising with imposed industrial standards and political power. We strongly believe that it is essential to build a new *place* for architecture in Europe.

**CONFLUENCE** is an educational approach that is open, alternative, international, collaborative and innovative, moving towards a hopeful and forward-looking architecture for the 21st century. Based on an evolving and radical understanding of research, experimentation and trans-disciplinarity.

The Institute propose to:

- construct an unparalleled understanding of architecture at the encounter of disciplines
- cross prospective and experimental visions
- create an appetite for engagement
- generate unpredicted alternatives
- resist the homogenization of production and imposed standards
- go beyond the implicit limits of architecture, in order to create unimaginable opportunities.

**CONFLUENCE**, anchored in the economy of the world, is a site of synergies, a site of hybridization. Architects, critics, artists, thinkers, philosophers, film-makers, scientists, engineers and manufacturers work together to share knowledge and discoveries. Without stylistic prejudice or ideology, a diversity of cultures, knowledge and practices makes it possible to develop ideas and projects in order to imagine all that is possible.

**Intuition, analysis, confrontation, reaction, beginnings, destabilization, emulation, convergence – CONFLUENCE.**

**CONFLUENCE** is the place where open attitudes and autonomous temperaments are forged through diverse forms of experimentation. The teaching of architecture must allow students to confront problems encountered in the world and to use new tools to address them.

**CONFLUENCE** is the convergence of different forms of knowledge that generate new understandings and hybrid forms of research. Different disciplines like physics, biology, neurology and new technologies as well as sociology and the visual arts take part — in an original way — in the elaboration of teaching and contribute to the elaboration of research and new projects.

**CONFLUENCE** is the site of emergence of new relations between systems of thought, modes of construction, aesthetic systems, manufacturing processes and modes of organization. The specificity of

the experimentation / creation / research at **CONFLUENCE** is its capacity to bring together prospective visions with their deployment.

**CONFLUENCE** fosters the convergence of conception and production: The studio project is an experience fed by multiple exchanges between theory and experimentation.

## **10 Commendations**

The visiting board made the following commendations:

- 10.1 The board commends the commitment and spirit of the staff and students in the joint enterprise of developing a new institute of architecture.
- 10.2 The board commends the institute's realisation of a student-centered curriculum, and opportunities that allow students to take responsibility in the management of their learning and teaching environment.
- 10.3 The board commends the institute's ambition and endeavours in reconsidering the scope and dimensions of a contemporary architectural education.
- 10.4 The board commends the institute on the quality and range of the amenities and extent of resourcing available within the Confluence degrees.

## **11 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.

- 11.1 While the panel recognises that the institute has provided mappings of the RIBA General Criteria for Confluence Degree Level A and Confluence Degree Level B, the institute must provide a document mapping all RIBA Graduate Attributes for Parts 1 and 2 against the course and credit structure for each award.
- 11.2 The institute should clearly articulate the aims, objectives and learning outcomes for each award in order to provide a clear armature to underpin the combination of studio, seminar, workshop and intern elements contained within the awards. This should also articulate the progressive nature of each level within the awards.
- 11.3 The institute should devise a means for students to map their work against the General Criteria and Graduate Attributes in order to support the development of an individual trajectory and provide an element of critical self-reflection at Parts 1 and 2.
- 11.4 The institute must ensure that newly developed course content covering architectural law and entrepreneurship is embedded within both awards.

- 11.5 The institute must develop a means of exploring the impact of anticipated growth in student numbers, in order to ensure that the quality and distinctive characteristics of the current student experience and programme delivery can be maintained in the future.
- 11.6 For the next RIBA visiting board, the institute should provide a portfolio sample that represents the full range of students' ability. An academic portfolio must contain all assessed work produced by an individual student for an academic year, and must include:
- design studio projects
  - design process and development work
  - drawings, sketches, and design diagrams
  - sketch and final models
  - larger scale 3D work
  - structural, constructional, and environmental information
  - essays
  - dissertations
  - reports and other research work
  - examination scripts

**12. 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.

- 12.1 The institute should develop explicit assessment criteria to support staff in achieving consistency within levels of attainment across studio, seminar and workshop components and within year groups.
- 12.2 The board recognises the development of technology and environmental design input over the last year but would strongly advise the institute to consider how this could be reinforced and extended in line with the focus of the institute.
- 12.3 The board supports the institute's aspirations and encourages it to develop ways of exploring the potential for designing and making at a range of scales including at full size and to consider the opportunities presented in this for greater collaborative working and team building.

**13 Delivery of academic position**

The board felt that the position statement reflected the school's areas of activity and the features of teaching and learning that characterise and distinguish the courses when considered against other schools of architecture.

**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 parts 1 and 2**

Please see action point 11.1. and 11.3

**15 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 11.1. and 11.3

**16 Other information**

**16.1 Student numbers**

At the time of the 2018 RIBA visiting board:

16 students across the two courses

2 students studying for their diploma

**16.2 Documentation provided**

All required RIBA documentation was provided prior the visit. The only omission was the mapping of the Graduate Attributes. Please see action point 11.1

**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**