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**Royal Institute of British Architects**

**Report of the RIBA Full Visiting Board  
to Universidad de Chile**

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- 1 Details of institution hosting course/s** **(report part A)**  
 Universidad de Chile  
 Escuela de Arquitectura  
 Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo  
 Portugal 84  
 Santiago 8331051  
 Chile
- 2 Director of Architecture Department**  
 María Del Pilar Barba Buscaglia
- 3 Course/s offered for validation**  
 8 semesters Licenciatura equivalent to RIBA part 1  
 4 semesters Titulo de Arquitecto equivalent to RIBA part 2
- 4 Course leader/s**  
 Gabriela Muñoz UG Director  
 Pedro Soza UG Associate Director  
 Juan Pablo Urrutia Architecture Degree Head
- 5 Awarding body**  
 Universidad de Chile
- 6 The Visiting Board**  
 Don Gray chair/academic  
 Sally Stewart vice chair/academic  
 Virginia Rammou academic  
 Peter Williams practitioner  
 Fernando Toro Cano regional representative  
 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, and effective from September 2011); this document is available at [www.architecture.com](http://www.architecture.com).
- 8 Recommendation of the Visiting Board**  
 On 13 February 2019 the RIBA Education Committee confirmed that the following courses and qualifications are validated with conditions:
- 8 semesters Licenciatura equivalent to RIBA part 1**  
**4 semesters Titulo de Arquitecto equivalent to RIBA part 2**
- Re-evaluation of the student portfolios by means of a revisit by a sub-group to consider the School's response to the conditions will take place on a date agreed between the Faculty and the RIBA. This must take place no later than 2020.

**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**

Since the creation of the first 'Course of Architecture' in 1849 under the direction of the French architect Claude François Brunet de Baines, the School of Architecture of the Universidad de Chile (UCh) has developed a close relationship with the State, national development projects and public issues, marked by the strong social engagement and responsibility from students and staff. This relationship has produced -across the country and over the years- many relevant public buildings, urban plans, regulations and projects, plus a deep knowledge in local architecture through research and publications, which continues to be the distinctive feature of our School.

Throughout its history, architecture training at UCh has been influenced by four major concerns, which have also shaped research within the School: urban planning, structural and building technologies, heritage preservation and housing development.

In sum, the ethos of the school can be summarised as follows: at Universidad de Chile, we make Chile. From the small town hall in the far north down to the rural school in Patagonia, you will find architects from Universidad de Chile designing, and developing their country. Our alumni and our students are the ones who design and build Chile.

In accordance with our graduation profile, we define ourselves as a school training architects who have a strong sense of social responsibility, interested in influencing and developing public policies, with a deep understanding of territorial and urban planning issues, technically proficient in terms of building technologies, and able and willing to collaborate with other disciplines in their work.

Currently, the School is teaching courses from two different plans: the knowledge-based 1998 plan and the competence-based 2016 plan. Nevertheless, the ethos that inspires both plans has remained unchanged.

In the last 20 years, education in Chile at university level has changed dramatically, rapidly expanding in terms of the total amount of students. Our School is facing several challenges related to that phenomenon on one hand, the need for infrastructure expansion due to the increased

number of first-year students (from 180 in 1998 to 300 in 2018) and the technologies needed for state-of-the-art teaching; and, on the other hand, the need for adjusting to a more diverse cohort, both in terms of methods and resources (more than half of first-year students are the first in their families to attend university and belong to the poorest 60% of the population).

The new Architecture plan is organised in five ‘realms of competence’ that represent the scope and skills needed by future architects to successfully perform in the professional milieu:

- Diagnosing scopes of action
- Planning the means and designing habitable space
- Managing implementation
- Coordinating the procedure
- Conducting research

These competences set the framework for the design of studios and courses between first and eleventh semesters. Compulsory courses are comprised in a five-semester cycle, after which students enter a three-semester cycle where they can choose their own curriculum, they obtain their ‘Licenciatura’ (Part I) and also eventually an ‘intermediate certification’ in one of seven areas: public policies; history, theory and criticism; technology; management; sustainability; heritage; and landscape and territory.

After completion of the Licenciatura, students enter a three-semester ‘professional cycle’, where they must spend one semester in professional internship, plus two terms developing their diploma project, while also taking some courses from the Graduate School.

It is important to state that this programme started in 2016 and will be fully implemented by July 2021. Over the next 5 years, the School must address six main challenges:

1. To ensure coordination across each level, between studio and courses, whose aim is to improve knowledge and skills’ and guarantee that students effectively work no more than 45 hours a week;
2. To consolidate the portfolio as the main instrument for recording and representing advancement from students and the School;
3. To improve and expand infrastructure, in order to accommodate current and future cohorts and to provide students and staff with better spaces for interaction;
4. To implement an effective transition from undergraduate level to Masters level;
5. To provide a comprehensive offer of elective courses, to make intermediate certification available for all students, and;
6. To develop a consistent offer of courses in English, in order to attract students from Europe, Oceania and North America.

To achieve these goals, the School, with the support from the Dean’s Office, the Office for Academic Affairs and International Relations and the Office for Students’ Affairs, will undertake the following tasks:

1. Setting up a Teaching & Learning Enhancement Unit, which will monitor the development of the architecture curriculum, conduct surveys and studies and organise assessment meetings to ensure quality and coordination;
2. Reactivating the *Proceso* web, in order to provide both internal and external users with a comprehensive platform that hosts all students' work represented in their portfolios;
3. Developing an infrastructure and investment plan that considers in the first stage (2019-2021) a 1,200 sqm academic building which will host four laboratories (Fabrication and Prototyping, Computer Modelling, Visualisation and Data Management, and Space and Territorial Analysis);
4. Enhancing coordination between the School, the Graduate School and the Departments and Institutes, in order to better organise courses at both graduate and undergraduate levels.

## 11 Conditions

**The following conditions of recognition apply:**

- 11.1 Because of the structure of the Titulo de Arquitecto course, it is still possible for a student to choose the Thesis Project route and not present a comprehensive design project in their final year. The school must revise the academic modules within this programme to ensure all students will be able to present a comprehensive design project that will satisfy the RIBA validation criteria, including the 50% design requirement.

Note: The academic team at Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo provided the Board with a guarantee that all students entering the final 2 years of the Part 2 programme would undertake a comprehensive design project.

- 11.2 The Faculty must make full academic portfolios containing the range of students' achievements available to the RIBA Visiting Board. An academic portfolio contains all assessed work produced by a student in modules where the RIBA Graduate Attributes and General Criteria are met. (as noted in clause 4.7 of the RIBA Procedures for Validation).

### **Revisits (page 37 of Procedures document)**

where the revisiting sub-group is satisfied the conditions in the report have been met, the RIBA Education Committee will recommend validation without conditions until the next scheduled visiting board in 2023.

If after considering new work at the revisit, the sub-group is not satisfied the necessary improvements have been made, a full board will visit the school usually no more than 12 months after the revisiting sub-group; **this will result either in continued validation or withdrawal of validation.**

If no revisit is agreed with the school within 3 months of the RIBA Education Committee ratifying the final version of the visiting board report requiring a revisit, **validation will be withdrawn.**

**12 Commendations**

The visiting board made the following commendations:

- 12.1 The Board commends the school and the Faculty on its commitment to social engagement and inclusion, and the focus this provides within studio projects and the wider programme content, and across the student and staff bodies.
- 12.2 The Board commends the school on the developments in teaching sustainability, materiality and structural design within the Part 1 award, and the depth of understanding demonstrated.
- 12.3 The Board commends the schools work to recalibrate student workload to a sustainable level and encourages course and programme staff to continue this process.

**13 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.

- 13.1 The Faculty should clearly articulate the aims and objectives of each level to help support the development and communication of a progressive curriculum across the Part 1 and Part 2.
- 13.2 The Faculty should consider how coordination can be introduced within each year of the degree programmes to support students, through the alignment and consistency of learning and teaching across courses and subject areas, as has been recently established in year 1.
- 13.3 The Faculty must ensure that the RIBA New Courses Group is notified of any changes to course structure and/or content. Documents should provide a synoptic overview of the rationale for the changes to the course along with clear comparisons made between the existing course structure/content and that proposed.
- 13.4 The Faculty must revise the 'Academic Position Statement' to better reflect the current ethos, identity and future plans of the programmes and how it intends to develop these over the next 5 years.

**14 Delivery of academic position**

Please see action point 13.4.

**Academic Position Statement**

The Board felt that the Academic Position Statement submitted by the *Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo* did not truly reflect the ethos of the programmes as articulated by staff and students. While there is useful statistical and historical information in the current Position Statement, it does not take account many of the distinctive features of the school.

The Academic Position Statement represents an opportunity for the Institution to communicate its distinctive academic character and promote this to an external audience. The Academic Position Statement should be prepared by the Head of School in association

with staff members and shared among them for critical appraisal. The following notable features emerged from discussions with staff and students and could be considered for inclusion in a redrafted Statement.

- Social engagement and responsibility - many graduates pursue careers within government institutions, exerting influence on policy.
- The diversity of the student cohort – the University is committed to encourage participation for students who belong to the poorest 60% in the country.
- Internships – the success of the internship programme as perceived by those professionals from practice who participate. Students were described as rigorous, responsible and with a good balance of skills. Practice professionals often employed those who took part in the internship programme subsequent to graduation.
- Heritage and urbanism – projects often combined aspects of heritage and conservation within an urban context.

#### **Student Course Appraisal**

The Board felt that the Student Course Appraisal was not a true appraisal by students of the current or proposed programmes. The student contribution should be as described in the RIBA procedures for Validation and Validation Criteria for UK and International Courses and Examinations in Architecture, Second Revision 2 May 2014, paragraph 4.1: “The student course appraisal must be written and agreed by a representative cross section of students attending the course/s”.

The school is encouraged to give students full responsibility for articulating their own appraisal, focussing on feedback from school reps and the student cohort.

#### **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 condition 11.1 and condition 11.2.

#### **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 condition 11.1 and condition 11.2.

**17 Other information**

**17.1 Student numbers**

At the time of the 2018 RIBA visiting board: 1286

**17.2 Documentation provided**

The Faculty did not provide all required documentation requested by the RIBA prior the visiting board. The requirements are outlined on page.24 onwards of the RIBA Procedures for Validation.

**\*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**