

# **Report of the RIBA visiting board to the Cracow University of Technology**

**Date of visiting board:** 1 and 2 December 2022  
**Confirmed by RIBA:** 20 April 2023

**1 Details of institution hosting courses**

Cracow University of Technology  
Warszawska 24, 31-155 Kraków

ul. Podchorążych 1  
30-084 Kraków

**2 Courses offered for validation**

Bachelor of Science in Architecture, Part 1  
Master of Science in Architecture, Part 2

**3 Dean**

Magdalena Koziień-Woźniak  
dr hab. Eng. arch., prof. PK

**Vice-Dean for Science**

Justyna Kobylarczyk  
prof. dr hab. Eng. arch.

**Vice Dean for Organization:**

Tomasz Kozłowski  
prof. dr hab. Eng. arch.

**Vice-Dean for Student Affairs:**

Agnieszka Wójtowicz-Wróbel  
Dr. Eng. arch. *in the field of architecture*

**Vice-Dean for Student Affairs:**

Urszula Forczek – Brataniec  
dr hab. Eng. arch., prof. PK *in the field of landscape architecture*

**4 Awarding body**

Cracow University of Technology

**5 The visiting board**

Peter Williams – Chair  
Dr Sara Biscaya - Vice-Chair  
Carol Norton  
Marcin Buczek-Palczyński – regional representative

**In attendance:**

Stephanie Beasley-Suffolk – RIBA – validation manager

**6 Procedures and criteria for the online 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 Proposals of the visiting board**

On 20 April 2023 the RIBA confirmed continued validation of the following courses:

Bachelor of Science in Architecture, Part 1  
 Master of Science in Architecture, Part 2

The next visiting board will take place in 2027.

**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 of the annual statistical return issued by the RIBA Education Department

**9 Academic position statement (written by the Faculty)**

The Faculty of Architecture of the Cracow University of Technology is an academic public university with more than 70 years of tradition in educating architects. It was established within the framework of Polytechnic Faculties of the Mining Academy based in the Wawel Castle as early as during the first days of freedom after the World War II - the first entrance examination was held on the renaissance Wawel Courtyard in May 1945. Under the government decree, in 1954 the Polytechnic Faculties of the Mining Academy were transformed into the Cracow University of Technology. The Faculty was moved from the prestigious royal estates, but still remains located in the centre of the city of the highest historical architectural value and quality in Poland.

For many years now the Faculty of Architecture in Cracow has occupied a high scientific position in the Polish academic community. It was assigned with the "A" scientific category by The Ministry of Science and Higher Education. The Faculty of Architecture is one of only three schools in Poland that hold full academic rights - it is entitled to conduct doctoral and habilitation programmes, as well as procedures leading to conferring the scientific title of a professor, which is possible thanks to its highly qualified academic staff. The Faculty is recognised within the top category for research and teaching. The Faculty is a regularly accredited KAUT - Komisja Akredytacyjna Uczelni Technicznych (Technical College Accreditation Board) which is equivalent to the EUR-ACE® Label (European Network for Engineering Accreditation (ENAE) accreditation

system). The Faculty is accredited by the PKA - Polska Komisja Akredytacyjna (Polish Accreditation Commission) with a distinctive rating. It is the only faculty in the country that holds the Accreditation of RIBA.

The Faculty, interested in built and natural environment, educates students in two majors in Engineer's and Master's courses: future architects and urban planner at the major Architecture, and landscape architects at the major Landscape Architecture. It is also engaged in cooperation with other faculties of the Cracow University of Technology. In collaboration with the Faculty of Civil Engineering and the Faculty of Environmental Engineering, the Faculty of Architecture launched courses educating specialists in Land Management at Master's interfaculty studies in the specialty Urban Planning and Transport and Spatial Planning and Municipal Services.

The strength of the school is grounded in comprehensive and integrated teaching of architecture and urban planning, conducted at a very high level by the teaching staff, including also practitioners who enjoy international renown. The Faculty of Architecture at the Cracow University of Technology offers its students an opportunity to obtain the highest level of knowledge, skills, and creativity in the process of designing spaces. The goal of the school is to train top-class specialists to practice a profession of social trust, understanding the significance of cultural values in the globalised world, open to permanent broadening of their knowledge and practical skills, subscribing to universal principles of ethics in the process of satisfying the needs of individuals and social groups. The goal of the school is also providing support for the development of the academic staff in the field of architecture and urban planning.

Regarding research interests, staff of the Faculty is grouped in seven Institutes, at the same time teaching in distinct groups (units) across the programme. Students acquire and develop their skills of research works within the scheme of the obligatory and optional syllabus, as well as their operations in the students' scientific clubs, participation in designing workshops, or cooperation while working on specific topics of research conducted in the Institutes of the Faculty. In master programme, students are engaged to develop their own agenda. Students take part in conferences, leading to connections with other universities and publications. The faculty aspires to prepare its graduates to competition and to equip them with the ability to undertake activities in different fields, e.g. in the creative design, performing specific functions in local governmental and building supervision authorities, acting as decision-makers in public services, performing the duties of a building sector specialist, or of an actor in the industrial process connected with it. As the teaching process conducted by the Faculty includes tasks relating to the expectations and needs of local governments and of the business environment. The Faculty aims to prepare its graduates to their professional practice and to the fluctuating demands of the job market. This is achieved thanks to broad knowledge and skills acquired during the courses, enabling to make design-related decisions in different scales

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connected with designing spaces - from spatial planning and urban design to buildings and architectural details and elements of fittings.

The Faculty conducts more and more intensive cooperation with governmental organisations and trade ones (SARP National Chamber of Polish Architects, TUP Polish Chamber of Town Planners). The Faculty develops broad cooperation with local governments of towns and communes and companies engaged in the building industry. The Faculty has signed letters of intent with many municipalities and companies whose specific and real problems become project tasks for students. Representatives of municipal authorities and companies participate in site visits, discussions and project presentations. They organize meetings and discussions with local communities. This cooperation allows to bring our students closer to the reality of their future profession and to exchange experiences along the line University - Local Government - Business. Collaboration in the subject of sustainable cultural and environmental development and of innovative technologies seems to be particularly important.

The strategy of internationalisation implemented by the Faculty is based on continuation of the previously conducted international cooperation in terms of teaching and scientific research and opening up to new directions and challenges resulting from students' mobility in the global scale and rapid development of science beyond Europe. It is heading towards achieving even better degree of internationalisation within the scheme of different forms of teaching conducted at the Faculty of Architecture, which should be assisted by constant improvement of the quality of teaching, guaranteed by international accreditations for subsequent years, such as RIBA and KAUT accreditations. Since 2013 the Faculty of Architecture of the Cracow University of Technology holds Master's Degree Studies in Architecture in English. The program of study of the Master's studies in English is equivalent with that of the courses conducted in Polish. It is fully covered by means of a new form of an integrated modular system, conducted by the teaching staff of the Faculty and professors from foreign universities. Courses taught in English fulfil an important role in the internationalisation process - they constitute an interesting educational offer, attracting growing numbers of students from many countries of the world. It is planned to extend the courses available in English with Engineer's studies and doctoral studies.

Correlation of the current form of teaching at the Faculty of Architecture and the RIBA criteria has created an absolutely new educational culture. This new direction along with the new method has been strengthened by governmental decrees, which imposed an obligation on Polish universities to create a quality management system corresponding to the European and Bologna model. Working according to these criteria and basing on the requirements defined in the Internal Education Quality Assurance System at the Cracow University of Technology (procedures), we continuously monitor all fields of operation of the Faculty, particularly including areas which require further improvements and strengthening, and we secure the

recognition of those fields in which we have the most outstanding achievements. The faculty has a number of tools for monitoring the quality of education such as faculty commissions (Commission for Quality of Education and Commission for Didactics) and university quality assurance procedures. This process supports the actions of the Faculty which aim to secure its high position on the market of higher education.

**10. Commendations**

- 10.1 The Board would like to re-iterate the commendations stated by the 2017 visiting board.
- 10.2 The Board commends the development of strategies to support students in meeting the current and future demands of a changing profession
- 10.3 The Board supports the engagement with a range of scales and contexts, from urban to rural and the integration of urban strategy and development as a core strength of the programme. The Board encourage this to be further developed in the MSc.
- 10.4 The Board congratulates the Faculty and the University for their recent accomplishment in being assigned the “A” scientific category by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education.

**11. Conditions**

There are no conditions.

**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. The university is referred to the RIBA’s criteria and procedures for validation for details of mid-term monitoring processes. Failure by the university to satisfactorily resolve action points may result in a course being conditioned by a future visiting board.

- 12.1 The Board invites the School to review its academic position statement to better reflect the existing level of ambition, passion and creativity within the Faculty at all academic levels.

**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 encourages the School at both Part 1 and Part 2 to make environmental strategies and sustainability more explicit and integrated within the design projects.
- 13.2 The Bachelor of Science in Architecture (English) and Master of Science in Architecture (English) may benefit from the use of the unique context of Kraków and the surrounding region as sites within design projects.

- 13.3 The Board welcomes the ongoing development in the MSc towards achieving greater integration of the criteria within the design project. We encourage the development of experimentation to advance design ambition in the coming years.
- 13.4 The Board advises the Faculty to formalise a strategy to facilitate the continuing professional development of early career academics and researchers.
- 13.5 The Board encourages the School to develop the knowledge and understanding of ethical and professional practice at both Bachelor and Master's level.
- 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.
- 14.1 Part 1**  
The Board confirmed that all Part 1 graduate attributes were met by graduates of the Bachelor of Science in Architecture, Part 1.
- 14.2 Part 2**  
The Board confirmed that all Part 2 graduate attributes were met by graduates of the Master of Science in Architecture, Part 2.
- 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.
- The Board made no further comments.
- 16 Other information**
- 16.1 Student numbers**  
Currently, the Faculty educates 1394 Polish students and 71 students from abroad at the majors Architecture, Landscape Architecture as well as 64 foreign students within the scheme of the Erasmus exchange and 3 Mostech Exchange Students, 380 Students from ISE and 8 Bilateral exchange programm Students. The Faculty educates 83 students of postgraduate courses and 238 students of doctoral studies.

**16.2 Documentation provided**

The Department provided all documentation as required by the Procedures for Validation.

**17 Notes of meetings**

On request, the RIBA will issue a copy of the minutes taken from the following meetings: **These notes will not form part of the published report but will be made available on request. The full set of notes will be issued to the next full visiting board.**

- Meeting with budget holder and course leaders
- Meeting with students
- Meeting with the head of institution
- Meeting with external examiners
- Meeting with staff