



Royal Institute of British Architects

**Report of the RIBA Full Visiting Board
to Pontificia Universidad Javeriana**

**Date of Visiting Board: 26-28 July 2023
Confirmed by the RIBA: 11 October 2023**

1 Details of institution hosting courses

Facultad de Arquitectura Y Diseño
Pontificia Universidad Javeriana
Carrera 7a No 40-62
Bogotá DC
Colombia

2 Courses offered for validation

Programme of Architecture (10 semesters), Parts 1 and 2

3 Head of School

Alfonso Gomez Gomez	Dean of the School of Architecture
Constanza Ordóñez Torres	Head of Architecture Programme

4 Awarding body

Pontificia Universidad Javeriana

5 The Visiting Board

Sally Stewart	Academic/Chair
Paula Craft-Pegg	Academic
Kathy Gal	Practitioner/Academic
Erika Ayala Garcia	Academic/Regional Representative
Sophie Bailey	RIBA Head of Validation

6 Procedures and Themes and Values for Architectural Education

The Visiting Board was carried out under the RIBA Procedures for Validation and Themes and Values for UK and international courses in architecture (published September 2021, and effective from September 2022); this document is available at www.architecture.com.

7 Proposals of the Visiting Board

On the 11 October 2023 the RIBA confirmed that the following courses and qualifications are unconditionally revalidated:

Programme of Architecture (10 semesters), Parts 1 and 2

Given the significant revisions made to the Programme which have currently reached semester 5, the period of revalidation is limited to three years.

The next visit to Pontificia Universidad Javeriana will take place in 2026.

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 School)

As in all programmes at the Javeriana University, the Architecture programme bases its curriculum on coherence with the institutional mission:

The Pontificia Universidad Javeriana is a Catholic institution of higher education, founded and governed by the Jesuit Community, committed to the educational principles and guidelines of the founding entity. As a University integrated into a country of regions, with a global and interdisciplinary perspective, it aims to:

The comprehensive training of people who stand up for their high human, ethical, academic and professional qualities and for their social responsibility,

The creation and development of knowledge and culture with a critical and innovative perspective,

For the achievement of a just, sustainable, inclusive, democratic and caring society that respects human dignity.

In accordance with the institutional commitments, the programme seeks the comprehensive training of architects who stand out for their high human, ethical, academic and professional quality and for their social responsibility. To train a professional with an attitude of commitment to society and their environment, able to contribute to the solution of problems in the Colombian environment through the understanding and creation of habitable human space, as well as the techniques and technologies necessary for the material response.

The Javeriana principle of ***personal accompaniment or cura personalis*** is part of the formative foundations that are directed towards special care and attention for the person. In the Architecture programme, this accompaniment is done in a direct and personalised way through the ***Academic Counselling*** programme, made up of a team of academics who guide students in making decisions about their scholar route to plan each semester, with the aim of taking the options that best suit their interests. They also guide them in resolving personal problems that may affect their academic performance, working together with the Welfare Vice Rector's Office. Academic counselling has been consolidated as a vital mechanism to reduce student desertion.

The Javeriana University sets out the specific guidelines for the exercise of the university functions developed by the educational community within the framework of ***integral education***, which is understood as a form of education that seeks the harmonious development of all the dimensions of the individual.

An essential part of the curriculum is ***learning based on direct experience*** as a method of knowledge. Through the development of projects in real contact with communities in different regions of the country. It develops its formative line through a ***social approach*** that favours an understanding of the problems and proposals focused on the study of the real priorities of the country. This commitment is achieved through an integral methodology in the development of the different courses and academic activities, such as in

Studios as: "Housing for the Displaced Population", "Informal (or popular) Housing", "New Territories", "Eco-social Architecture", "International Experiences Programme PEI", and "Human Spatiality". In addition, the social focus is a factor of identity of the research projects developed within the Faculty.

In order to guarantee the **interdisciplinary nature of** the curriculum, Architecture students take subjects from different areas of knowledge, offered by Departments, both part of the School and beyond, that provide teaching services to the Architecture Degree: Architecture, Design, Aesthetics, Arts, Civil Engineering, Administration, Rural Development, Mathematics, Philosophy and the Centre for Theological Education, among others. Students are free to take subjects from the above-mentioned departments.

The Design Studios are developed jointly with teaching staff who are experts in specific areas: Architectural Design, Technology, Environment, Urban Planning, Aesthetics, Management, etc. Each week students have one or more independent classes with each lecturer, and a joint class called Committee Session with all of them simultaneously, to review their progress under a comprehensive vision.

The **complementary option** subjects allow them to broaden their training in areas related to architecture and the **electives** in areas other than architecture. Students have the possibility of following academic routes according to their interests and expectations, but having the design Studios as the fundamental. In this sense, the **flexibility of the curriculum** is accomplished.

Towards the end of the degree, students can participate in the **double degree** programme with the Politecnico di Torino, Italy, replacing the last year of the degree with two years of a Master's degree. With the title of Magister in Torino, they obtain the title of Architect in Colombia. They also have the possibility of taking **co-terminal** subjects in different postgraduate courses at the University, which are recognised as subjects for the undergraduate degree and also generate a connection with the start of postgraduate courses of their choice.

In the final **degree project**, they have the possibility to choose the topic according to their personal interests and to select their supervisor. The final degree projects are linked to the lines of research of the Department of Architecture and the Department of Aesthetics. To date, the Programme maintains the High Quality Accreditation granted by the Ministry of National Education of Colombia.

10 Commendations

- 10.1 The Board commends the ethos of the institution in supporting the development of graduates as well rounded, ethical and socially engaged citizens, the impact of which is evident in the focus for studios and the student work.
- 10.2 The Board commends the range of external advisors, visitors and practitioners who now contribute to the programme, and provide a

professional context and point of reference for the curriculum, standards, and relevance of work across both cycles.

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 It is a requirement for continued validation that the school must submit course changes to the RIBA New Course Group as soon as these are internally validated by the institution. This is in the interests of keeping RIBA documentation and online information up to date, and ensures that course changes continue to map satisfactorily against the Themes and Values and Graduate Attributes. This applies to all courses revised within the new study plan curriculum.

12.2 The school must provide complete academic portfolios containing the full range of students' achievements available to the RIBA Visiting Board. An academic portfolio contains all assignments submitted for assessment by a student in modules where the RIBA Graduate Attributes and Themes and Values are to be met. The work contained should map directly to the work submitted for assessment.

12.3 Action point 13.1 from 2016 RIBA Visiting Board: in preparation for the next RIBA validation Board the school should put a process in place to support the student body in the development of a Student Appraisal document. When asked during the 2023 meeting, students were unaware of the required document.

12.4 Action point 13.4 from the 2016 RIBA Visiting Board: The school must consider ways of developing the final degree project so that it demonstrates greater coherent spatial and technological synthesis and progression from the design work carried out in semesters five to eight.

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 While the Board recognises the reduction of credit and student workload achieved within the new study plan, the Board encourages the school to continue to consider a manageable and viable student workload modelling good practice and behavior for future professionals.

13.2 The school should differentiate between the two cycles of the programme to ensure that the difference between the attainment and attributes of students progressing from the first cycle and graduation from the second, are clear.

- 13.3 The school should develop its mapping against the Themes and Values to articulate where courses introduce, engage with and assess criteria. This is to give a better sense of the progressive nature of the programme and identify key points of attainment in cycles 1 and 2.
- 13.4 The school considers how the rich variety of students work achieved across the considerable student body can be made present both physically and digitally.
- 13.5 The school considers how better to support the development of a school and studio culture and support students who do not have dedicated studio space on campus.

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 Part 1

The Board confirmed that all of the Part 1 graduate attributes were met by graduates of the Programme of Architecture (10 semesters).

Graduate Attributes for Part 2

The Board confirmed that all of the Part 2 graduate attributes were met by graduates of the Programme of Architecture (10 semesters).

15 Review of work against Themes and Values

It should be noted that where the Visiting Board considered the Themes and Values to have been met, no commentary is offered. Where concerns were noted (or a T&V were clearly not met), commentary is supplied. Finally, where academic outcomes suggested a T&V was particularly positively demonstrated, commentary is supplied.

Themes and Values for Part 1

The Board confirmed that all of the Themes and Values were met by graduates of the Programme of Architecture (10 semesters).

Themes and Values for Part 2

The Board confirmed that all of the Themes and Values were met by graduates of the Programme of Architecture (10 semesters).

16 Other information

16.1 Student numbers (from the School)

1,055 students currently enrolled on the Programme of Architecture

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.

- Budget holder and course leaders
- Students
- Head of Institution
- External examiners
- Staff