

**Report of the RIBA visiting board
to Tongji University**
College of Architecture and Urban Planning

Date of virtual visiting board: 12, 13 & 14 October 2022
Confirmed by RIBA: 20 March 2023

1. Details of institution hosting courses

College of Architecture and Urban Planning
Tongji University
1239 Siping Road
Yangpu District
Shanghai
China

2. Courses offered for validation

Bachelor of Engineering in Architecture (four-year programme)
Master in Architecture (2.5 years programme)

3. School Leader

Prof. LI Xiangning, Dean of College of architecture and urban planning
Prof. LIU Song, College council director, College of architecture and urban planning
Prof. GENG Huizhi, Deputy Dean of College of architecture and urban planning
Prof. SHI Xing, Director of the Key Laboratory for High-density Habitat Ecology and Energy Conservation of Ministry of Education

Department Leader

Prof. HU Rossana, head of Department of architecture, College of architecture and urban planning
Associate Prof. WANG Yi, Executive deputy head of Department of architecture, College of architecture and urban planning
Associate Prof. ZHANG Peng, Deputy Head of Department of architecture, College of architecture and urban planning
Associate Prof. DONG Yi, deputy head of Department of architecture, College of architecture and urban planning

Teaching Affairs Section Leader and Foreign affair leader

Mrs. ZHENG Yiyi, chief of the Teaching Affairs Section of the College of architecture and urban planning
Mrs. ZHANG Feng, deputy chief of the Teaching Affairs Section of the College of architecture and urban planning
Associate Prof. LIU Kan, Director of Foreign Affair Office, College of architecture and urban planning
Mrs. CAI Zengping, Finance Officer of College of architecture and urban planning

Design Studio Directors

Associate Prof. TIAN Weijia, director of Fundamental Architecture Studios, Department of architecture, College of architecture and urban planning
Associate Prof. HU Yanzhe, director of Senior Architecture Studios, Department of architecture, College of architecture and urban planning
Associate Prof. YU Zhongqi, director of Final Design, Department of architecture, College of architecture and urban planning
Associate Prof. DENG Feng, director of Design Studios in Master, Department of architecture, College of architecture and urban planning

4. Awarding body

Tongji University

5. The visiting board

Musa Garba- chair
 Dr Athena Moustaka – Vice Chair
 Layton Reid
 Arch. Ken Wai – 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 2021*; this document is available at www.architecture.com. The procedures were modified to allow the visit to take place online.

7. Proposals of the visiting board

On 20 March 2023 the RIBA confirmed validation of the following courses:

Bachelor of Engineering in Architecture (four-year programme):Part 1
 Master of Architecture (2.5 years programme): Part 2

The next visit to Tongji University 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 School*)

The Department of Architecture at Tongji University is one of the earliest and most established architecture schools in China and one of the strongest members of the prestigious "Four Old Colleges of Architecture of China". The department has been ranked among the top three in China according to the results of discipline assessment, and ranked 13th in the world in QS World University Rankings 2021 and 2022. The department is a leader in postgraduate architectural education in China. Founded in 1952, it was the first to recruit students at master's level (1956) and the first school to launch PhD programs (1981). In addition to this in 1988 the school set up a number of post-doctoral research stations and was among the first to pass the Chinese Architecture Professional Accreditation (in 1992). In 2007, the architecture discipline of Tongji was awarded as the first batch of state-level key disciplines. In 2010, the teaching team of architectural history and theory was awarded state-level faculty team. In 2016, our architecture discipline was listed among the first batch of "state certified first-class disciplines". In 2019, the undergraduate Architecture program was awarded as a state-level first class program. Relying on

outstanding overall strength, the architecture discipline maintaining a leading position in China and even in the world at large.

Taking the rational spirit of modern architecture as its soul, the architectural education of Tongji University engages with innovation and new developments in the industry globally, while embracing the original, contemporary and Chinese spirit in architecture. Thanks to the development of over 60 years and the continuous efforts of several generations, Tongji University has formed a unique philosophy for its architectural education to serve society by thinking globally while acting locally. The Architecture program of Tongji University upholds the following three distinctive characteristics in teaching and research policies:

- (1) An inclusive academic style and a diverse humanist atmosphere;
- (2) Rational and pragmatic professional attitude and pioneering and innovative spirit;
- (3) A globally-oriented disciplinary vision and future-oriented training direction.

This discipline has made a widely-recognized historical contribution to the evolution of Chinese modern architecture (especially to the dissemination and localization of modernist architectural ideas in China), and is known as "a key to the modernity of Chinese architecture". Thanks to the great efforts made by several generations, we have gradually formed a unique teaching system and training characteristics that can contribute to the society by combining China's conditions with the global context, and have maintained a good momentum of development.

Academic research

In CAUP, the architecture discipline has played a pivotal role in the development of Chinese architectural modernity. "Starting from Mr. FENG Jizhong, the founder of this discipline, the architects of Tongji University have always been at the forefront of modern Chinese architecture. They not only created a number of definitive works in the history of modern Chinese architecture, but also accumulated successful cases in all levels of architectural culture." "As a key to Chinese architecture modernity, the architects of Tongji University opened not only the door of input, but also the door of output" (Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of World Architecture). Since China began to open up and reform its economy in 1978, Tongji architectural education paid special attention to the pluralist thinking trend after modernism, adhered to the original spirit of "contemporary, Chinese", and cultivated a large number of leading professionals with international vision and social responsibility. The old generation of Tongji scholars flourished in the stars, and a number of young faculty members emerged as representative architects, which had an important influence and unique role in the development of contemporary Chinese architecture and urban construction.

Since the turn of the 21st century, the department has taken the themes of CAUP, "ecological city", "green building", "heritage protection" and "digital design" as priorities for its research focus and curriculum development and

thanks to the college's creation of a new interdisciplinary platform has formed a number of new thematic groups that can work seamlessly across the disciplines of the college. The groups participate in the college's Key Laboratories of Ecology and Low Energy Design, Study of Dense Habitat, and Ministry of Education, and have made numerous research achievements. In the fields of digital design and construction, the college has made significant breakthroughs, leapfrogging other schools to become a global leader in these areas.

Teaching organization

Our 143 full-time faculty members and hundreds of part-time faculty members have formed a comprehensive and powerful teaching team. Additionally, we have also established a talent training system covering the whole process from undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD. Our curriculum system can be classified into three categories, namely, design, history theory and technology. We have established a gradual system for all our students (from Year 1 to Year 4, from undergraduates to masters) to smoothly transit from knowledge acquisition to ability training. In terms of design course delivery, we focus on the balance between topicality, comprehensiveness, openness and depth. In terms of delivery of history and theory courses, we focus on the gradual improvement from knowledge to ideology. In terms of delivery of professional skill courses, we strive to reshape the traditional teaching mode of teaching professional skills only by combining experiment and practical operation in skill teaching, to allow students to deepen their understanding of professional skills through the use of skills. Our teaching is now characterized by the following features:

Trinity training matrix: We are committed to improving the trinity (i.e., knowledge, ability, and personality) of architecture professional training standards, thus forming a training matrix of "knowledge/ability/personality-curriculum".

Systematic and open training process: We strike a balance between systematization and openness during the entire course of architecture undergraduate study. We ensure the dialectical relationship between the basic teaching quality and the development of students' individuality by making overall arrangements.

Diversified achievement evaluation mode: We have established diversified evaluation approaches and formed a whole set of effective public evaluation methods and systems. In undergraduate teaching, various modes of professional teaching public evaluation chart (cross-class, cross-professional, cross-college, cross-university, internal + external, Chinese expert + foreign expert evaluation) are embodied in the whole process of professional teaching.

International collaboration

The College of Architecture and Urban Planning embraces the "internationalized" operation features of architecture program of Tongji University by further expanding breadth and depth of programs. We are carrying out various international collaboration projects, including credit

exchanges, semester exchanges, summer schools, joint work camps, international competitions, and joint dual-degree training. We have established a dual-degree joint training mechanism for postgraduate students with 13 internationally renowned architectural colleges and universities. In addition, we have also launched the first dual-degree undergraduate joint cultivation program for international students, with partners all over the world. By doing so, a comprehensive and high-level international collaboration system has taken shape. By introducing short-term teaching by professors from international first-line universities at a high frequency and on a large scale, the college is holding more than 150 international academic seminars every year. This expands the vision of faculty members and students and improves students' comprehensive qualities. The college has become an important international center for architectural education and scholarship.

10. Commendations

- 10.1 The Board commends the School's relationship with other schools of architecture, which culminates in the construction festival.
- 10.2 The Board commends the generous provision of facilities, some of which have been recently upgraded and expanded and which are appreciated by staff and students alike.
- 10.3 The Board commends the architecture staff for their commitment to students, providing pastoral care and academic support, particularly during the pandemic.
- 10.4 The Board commends the first-year programme, which is a rich introduction to architecture.

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 next visiting board will require greater clarity regarding staff and student input and how that manifests itself in influencing and shaping the course.
- 12.2 The School should encourage the students to investigate alternatives i.e. materials, structure and methods of construction. This should also be apparent in final presentations.
- 12.3 The School should promote design process to reinforce design quality. The Board suggests that the School could consider including process work in the assessment weighting.

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 Students should be encouraged to diversify presentations by exploring a variety of media.
- 13.2 The Board advises the School to consider ways of integrating non-core modules into design projects.
- 13.3 The Board advises the School to encourage experimentation, which is apparent in earlier years of the bachelor degree to be pursued through into later years.
- 13.4 The Board advises the School to show evidence of contextual studies and analysis and to show how it influences design development in the Bachelor degree.

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 Bachelor of Engineering in Architecture Part 1

The Board confirmed that all Part 1 graduate attributes were met by graduates of the Bachelor of Engineering in Architecture programme.

14.2 Master of Architecture, Part 2

The Board confirmed that all Part 2 graduate attributes were met by graduates of the Master of Architecture programme.

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

502 across both programmes (2021)

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 senior management of institution
- Meeting with external examiners
- Meeting with staff