

Report of the RIBA visiting board to the Universidad de Piloto

Date of visiting board: 15 and 16 August 2019
Confirmed by RIBA Education Committee: 22 January 2020

1 Details of institution hosting course/s

Universidad Piloto de Colombia
 Facultad de Arquitectura y Artes
 Cra. 9 #45A-44, Bogotá, Colombia

2 Faculty Dean

Farfán Sopo María Patricia

Architecture Programme Dean

Camacho Camacho Edgar Jose

3 Courses offered for validation

The Programme of Architecture, Part 1 and 2

4 Awarding body

Universidad de Piloto

5 The visiting board

Professor Don Gray, Chair
 Peter Garstecki – Vice Chair
 Camilo Garavito - Regional representative

One RIBA board member was unable to participate due to unforeseen circumstances. The Board proceeded with the agreement of the University and the RIBA Director of Education.

Stephanie Beasley-Suffolk – validation manager – in attendance.

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.

7 Proposals of the visiting board

On 22 January 2020 the RIBA Education Committee confirmed continued validation of the following courses:

The programme of architecture, Part 1 and 2

Part 1 is deemed to be met on successful completion of semester 6
 Part 2 is deemed to be met on successful completion of semester 10

The next full visiting board will take place in 2024.

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 (written by the School)

Since its founding in 1962, commitment to the development of Colombia has been the linchpin of the Universidad Piloto de Colombia, which has been consolidating itself, based on its experience and knowledge, as an institution geared towards contributing to the Social Construction of the Territory, through its different programs and levels of training.

Under this premise, the Architecture Program has structured its Curriculum in accordance with the work in diverse territories, establishing Spatial Transformation of the Territory based on the architectural, urban and social aspects as its main goal; without losing sight of architecture as the central focus, but working from the notion of the territory and taking into account the impact that interventions may have in the community.

The strategies that the University has been developing, and therefore the architecture faculty and program, to train its students, show a commitment to the training of professionals with critical thinking, able to contribute towards national development based on a vision of the world and through an academic background of excellence. The students of the Universidad Piloto are capable of having an impact on the culture, sciences, technology, society and territory, thanks to training based on teaching, research and social projection.

Under these three Pillars and with the aim of contributing towards the Social Construction of the Territory, the program has structured its Curriculum, disciplinary emphases, research incubators and representative projects, thus achieving comprehensive training committed to the development of the country and of future professionals.

In terms of comprehensiveness, the program, through basic, professional and supplementary training, has been able to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of architecture; focusing on the aspects of reality that motivate spatial transformation and centred upon architecture in the city and a diversity of other territorial contexts. This work includes multiple interactions through the professional components (design, technology, urbanism and representation and communication), disciplinary emphases (habitat, project, sustainability and landscape), substantive university functions (teaching, research and social protection), and interaction with the national and international external environment.

In terms of the theoretical foundation of the program, the Curriculum has been structured to enable students to develop abilities and acquire knowledge that will allow them to reach a critical position regarding the environment in which they live. In Part 1, students acquire creative and technical tools as a basis for their professional performance, through understanding architecture and its inhabitable spaces in the functional, aesthetic and symbolic aspects. In Part 2, students finish their training process, gaining the ability to develop a critical

posture about architecture and the ability to relate academia to the professional milieu.

In relation to commitment to the country, the program has developed four steps to enable students to acquire the necessary abilities and capacities to construct their own theoretical elements, while being open to the universal currents of history and theory.

The 4 steps that the program has developed are coordinated with the training principles established for each stage of student training, which are as follows: experience, which implies working on location, interpretations of what is observed, which is nourished by the knowledge they acquire about history, theory and urbanism, and finally, the conception and production of architectural projects with a strong sense of place.

In addition to training students in critical thought and in accordance with inherent knowledge about the architectural profession, the program provides students with a disciplinary training based on the four lines of emphasis that have been designed to structure the undergraduate and masters programs and the future doctoral program, whose main objectives are to train architects under the premise that they must contribute towards Spatial Transformation of the Territory based on the architectural, urban and social aspects. These four lines of emphasis are as follows:

1. Habitat and territory, a line whose aim is to understand habitat from a comprehensive perspective, addressing problems of habitat in urban and rural territories, based on recognizing, interpreting and respecting its cultural contents and environmental conditions with a view towards generating responses based on architecture to enable improvement in the conditions of quality of life of the communities that inhabit such territories.
2. Sustainable Architecture, a line that strengthens general recognition of the impacts of architectural projection in the environment. Using design based on topography, renewable natural resources and the social group among other aspects, this line seeks to reduce environmental impact while improving the well-being and comfort of users of the architectural spaces and of the territory.
3. Landscape, Place and territory, a line that seeks to understand landscape, location and territory based on the question of experience and memory, and the problem of cultural landscape, reflecting upon the insertion of buildings and interventions into the landscape.
4. Project: Theories, methods and practices, a line that delves into discussions about architectural composition, project strategies and operations, as well as how a project is formed and set up. At the same time, it reflects on the relationship between the urban space and architecture through the study of paradigmatic works that serve as an instrument of knowledge for architecture itself: analysis and analogy and transformation.

10 Commendations

The Board commends:

- 10.1 Commitment to the “Social Construction of the Territory” across a wide geographical area.
- 10.2 The School’s progress and development since the last RIBA visit in 2014.

10.3 The comprehensive exhibition, preliminary documentation and the participation of students.

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 academic portfolio must represent the full range of students' ability to include all assessed work, which should be presented clearly and logically, as described in section 4.7 of the Procedures for Validation (2011, revised May 2014).

12.2 The Board noted that action point 13.4 of the 2014 visiting board report had not been met in full.

While noting the progress made in this area since the 2014 Visiting Board, the 2019 Board re-iterates action point 13.4 of the 2014 report: "The Board recommends strengthening the theoretical and philosophical content of the programme to help inform more diverse design outcomes."

12.3 The School should ensure that Part 2 graduate attribute GA2.4 is met in full, including production of a relevant written assignment of appropriate length.

GA2.4: critical understanding of how knowledge is advanced through research to produce clear, logically argued and original *written* work relating to architectural culture, theory and design.

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 advises further development and enhancement of the resources of Fab Lab and model-making facilities such as woodwork or metalwork.

13.2 The Board recommends that expression of the "Piloto Spirit" of heritage and innovation be expressed in the provision of briefs in the final semester which more profoundly challenge the students.

13.3 Students should be encouraged to generate complex design proposals showing understanding of current architectural issues, originality in the application of subject knowledge and, where appropriate, to test new hypotheses and speculations, as stipulated in Graduate Attribute 2.1.

- 13.4 The Board advises the School to take full advantage of comments and advice from external advisers and to respond to them confirming the actions of the School.
- 13.5 The School should review the contribution of students who work in teams in the final project in 9th and 10th semester to allow individual submissions to be objectively assessed.
- 13.6 In the context of interdisciplinary approach, the School should provide a more robust approach to satisfy the requirements of General Criterion GC3:

“Knowledge of the fine arts as an influence on the quality of architectural design

GC3 The graduate will have knowledge of:

- .1 how the theories, practices and technologies of the arts influence architectural design;
- .2 the creative application of the fine arts and their relevance and impact on architecture;
- .3 the creative application of such work to studio design projects, in terms of their conceptualisation and representation.”

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 Programme of Architecture

While the Board confirmed that all Part 1 and 2 graduate attributes were met, please see Action Point 12.3 regarding GA2.4 and Advice 13.3 regarding GA2.1.

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.

- 15.1 Please see advice 13.6. The Board made no further comments.

16 Other information

16.1 Student numbers

230 students

16.2 Documentation provided

The School provided documentation as required by the Procedures for Validation. However, the School is referred to Action Point 12.1

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 mid-term panel and the next full visiting board.**

- Meeting with the Dean
- Meeting with students
- Meeting with Principal
- Meeting with external/peer reviewers
- Meeting with staff