
Royal Institute of British Architects

**Report of the RIBA visiting board
to the Pontificia Universidad Católica
de Chile**

Faculty of Architecture, Design and Urban Studies

1 Details of institution hosting course (report part A)

Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile
Av Libertador Bernardo O'Higgins 328
Santiago
Región Metropolitana
Chile

School address

Faculty of Architecture, Design and Urban Studies
El Comendador 1916, Providencia, Santiago, Chile

2 Dean

Mario Urbilla Sanz

3 Course offered for validation

Programme of Architecture

4 Director

Emilio De La Cerda Errazuriz

5 Awarding body

Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile

6 The visiting board

Roger Hawkins – Chair
Roz Barr – Vice Chair
Nic Clear
Cindy Walters
Felipe Vera, regional representative

Stephanie Beasley-Suffolk, Validation Manager, was in attendance.

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.

8 Proposals of the visiting board

At its meeting on 7 December 2016 the RIBA Education Committee confirmed unconditional validation of the following:

Licentiate in Architecture, Professional Title in Architecture, Part 1 and Part 2
MARQ Part 2
MPUR, Part 2
MAPA, Part 2
MASE, Part 2

The Board confirmed that all graduate attributes and criteria will be met at the conclusion of semester 11.

The first graduates from the new Masters programme will emerge in 2017. Students can ONLY be awarded the Master's if they have completed the whole architecture programme at PUC. Those who enrol only for the Masters do not receive the title of architect.

The next visiting board to PUC should take place in 2021.

9 Standard requirements for continued recognition

Continued RIBA recognition of all courses and qualifications is dependent upon:

- i external examiners (or an acceptable alternative) 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

The School of Architecture aims to educate professionals who are mindful and well versed in design. Our programme has a strong focus on both research and innovation, while also emphasizing the development of critical thinking skills and a deep understanding of history and theory.

The School of Architecture makes important contributions to the University and to the public realm, taking a leadership position in the quality of its teaching and research and promoting activities that underscore the importance of architecture in our country's development. Within the university, we believe that academic cooperation with other units and related areas of the university is important and here we contribute with an interdisciplinary dialogue that helps to position the University in this relevant cultural field. A series of activities and facts described below support our well-deserved reputation for excellence.

The School has the capacity to attract the very best students of the country. As one of the six careers of PUC that are ranked in The Best 50 of the World, Architecture UC is number 29/QS World University Ranking 2016, and our students are those who obtained the highest PSU scores (National University Selection Test) for university admission 2015-2016.

We have a highly qualified academic team: 40% of the full time professors have doctorate degrees, 44% have Master's degrees, and 12% are nationally and/or internationally recognised professionals. The faculty has a recognised research nucleus, with important participation and leadership in Interdisciplinary PUC Research Centres including: Centre of Sustainable Urban Development (CEDEUS); UC Centre of Wood Innovation (CIM UC); Centre of Cultural Heritage; Centre of the Atacama Desert; National Centre for the Research of Natural Disasters Integrated Management– CIGIDEN; as well as a national Interdisciplinary-Inter-institutional Project, among others.

In the professional field, our professors have developed a remarkable body of work, recognised both nationally and internationally. Some of our most recent highlights include: Professor Alejandro Aravena from Elemental awarded with the Pritzker Architecture Prize, the “Designs of The Year” Prize (2015) for the Innovation Centre UC building, and named as the Director of the 15th Architecture Biennale of Venice; Professor Teodoro Fernandez was presented with the National Architecture Prize 2015; since March 2015 two chairs designed by Professor Juan Ignacio Baixas have become part of MOMA´s permanent collection; Professor Pedro Alonso & Hugo Palmarola won the “Silver Lion” award at the 14th Architecture Biennale in Venice 2014 for Best Research Project; and also the three past presidents of The National Architects Association teach in our EAUC, Luis Eduardo Bresciani P. (2010- 2013), Sebastian Gray (2013- 2015), and currently Pilar Urrejola (2015- 2018).

In the field of publications, the publishing house of the EAUC, ARQ Editions is a recognised publisher and support service for teaching, research and creation in the university. It is an important actor in the dialogue with culture and architecture and serves as a window of architecture to society. ARQ Editions offers a respected space for the publication of books and periodicals of the highest quality that extends and spreads architectural documentation, architectural theory and urban and architectonic knowledge.

As a contribution to culture and to contemplate better cities is the lecture series "La Ciudad y las Palabras" (The City and Words), organized by our Faculty of Architecture, Design and Urban Studies and the Doctorate program. This activity has brought together the most outstanding international writers and is opened to the public. Three Nobel Prize winners have passed through this series: Mario Vargas Llosa, J.M.Coetzee and Orhan Pamuk, as well as Jonathan Franzen, Ricardo Piglia, Enrique Fogwill, Julian Barnes, Michel Houellebecq, Javier Marías, Ian McEwan, Richard Ford, Andrés Neuman and Alan Pauls, among others.

One of the most important recent contributions at the FADEU has been the growth of the Graduate programs. Since 2004, FADEU has granted a Doctorate Degree in Architecture and Urban Studies, the

only one in Chile. FADEU also promotes interdisciplinary work within the existing Masters' programmes: MARQ, MPUR, MAPA, MAPC, MAC, MADA, MHM, MDU and MASE, enabling our students to define a graduate profile with greater flexibility and interdisciplinary knowledge.

The new curriculum framework defines a set of disciplinary areas that allow students to embark upon different paths for professional specialisation and opens new fields to respond to society's current and increasingly more complex requirements. Our curriculum is based not only on the architect's role in building the contemporary city, but also on a model of university level academic education, taking all opportunities for development in the discipline and as professionals.

Four Disciplinary Areas form the academic project from undergraduate to graduate, in research and at the extra-curriculum level. These main areas are: Design studio and Representation; Theory, History and Criticism; Technique, Construction and Energy; and City and Landscape. Although the programme proposes a certain independence in the way the students build their coursework, the structure is divided in three stages:

The First Stage, which includes the Formative Studios, the Research and Project Studios, and most of the mandatory modules of the four areas, aims to give a broad scope of knowledge and skills for the students to have a general understanding of their own strengths and interests. Additionally, it provides the first approach to practical training through the Building Site Experience modules I and II. By the end of this stage, in the sixth semester, the students should meet the qualifications for Part 1.

The Second State includes the Elective Studios and the first In-depth Optional modules (OPR) linked to them as well as most of the optional modules from other disciplines (OFG) as part of PUC's General Training Programme (Plan de Formación General). At this stage the students must choose thematic studio modules and propose a personal Service and Professional practical experience plan, thus encouraging the students to define a professional and disciplinary profile that will be complemented at the Degree stage.

The Degree stage is conceived as the link between the Professional Degree and the academic Master's degree where the format is one of research and generation of new knowledge stemming from project experience. The aim is for students to obtain their architectural degrees and meet Part 2 qualification through the Masters' programs offered by FADEU, which will enable students to obtain higher- level skills and a greater depth of university education. This approach encourages academic work that is congruent and cooperative with the needs of the country, and makes students aware of the contribution that well done work can make to the quality of life.

11 Commendations

The visiting board made the following commendations:

- 11.1 The Board commends the sense of community and exceptional campus facilities, including the library, workshop and laboratories and use of the outdoor areas by students. The Board was also encouraged by the plans for the new student studios, in which staff and students are engaged and which are due to complete by the end of 2017.
- 11.2 The Board applauds the strategic ambitions of the University to widen participation among the student body. Future RIBA visiting boards will look forward to seeing evidence of how this has been implemented and the positive impact this will have.
- 11.3 The Board were impressed by the School's international outlook, which included publications and awards and engagement with other institutions.

12 Conditions

There are no conditions.

13 Action points

- 13.1 While the exhibition was beautifully curated, preparation for future visits should ensure that the specific requirements of the RIBA have been met and that the Board is able to see the academic journey of the individual student. This should include preparatory studies and development work (process) as well as final projects and supporting work. This was raised by the 2010 Visiting Board (Advice 12.3).
- 13.2 The present Board has confidence that Part 2 criteria and attributes are met within the traditional route. The Board understands that the new Master's programme is in progress and the first cohorts are due to graduate in 2017. Whilst the Board recognises this, future visiting boards will need to see that graduate attributes for Part 2 and criteria are clearly met within semesters 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 of all pathways.
- 13.3 Following recommendations 11.4 and 11.5 of the 2010 Visiting Board, the 2016 Board remains concerned about the level of complexity and integration of technology and environmental services within the student work at Part 2 level. The Board therefore strongly recommends that the School strengthen the integration of technology teaching from wider disciplines.
- 13.4 The RIBA Board noted a lack of clarity within the Master programmes which may be causing confusion among staff and students on the structure and pathways being mapped against criteria. A process for explicit mapping is therefore required.
- 13.5 The Board noted that there were inconsistencies in marking and feedback and recommends that better communication and

transparency of assessment are provided to students. This was raised by the 2010 Visiting Board (Advice 12.5).

14 Advice

- 14.1 The Board supports and were encouraged by the quality and commitment of the teaching staff and advises that, in addition to the current pool of academic and practising architects within the faculty, there is an opportunity to offer greater diversity by inviting a more varied pool of professionals to enhance the current programme. This may include artists, engineers, theorists and other related disciplines.
- 14.2 Due to the proximity of the Design School the Board noted an opportunity to promote interdisciplinary working within some of the architecture programmes that could be a further strength of the School.
- 14.3 While the Board recognises that the wider University offers pastoral care services, students within the School should be made aware of the services available to them. This could include an impartial service for the wellbeing of students within the architecture school. The Board notes concerns raised in the External Examiner's evaluation report of 12 June 2014.
- 14.4 The Board encourages the School to engage with a full range of representational skills within project work. This would encourage a greater diversity and experimentation across all outputs.

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.

The Board confirmed that all Part 1 and Part 2 graduate attributes were met by graduates of the programme. The Board refers the School Action Point 13.2, reminding them of the need to ensure that graduate attributes for Part 2 and criteria are clearly met within semesters 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 of all pathways.

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.

The Board was content that all criteria were met. The School is referred to Action Points 13.2 and 13.3.

17 Other information

17.1 Student numbers

782: 671 undergraduate
111 master's

17.2 Documentation provided

The School provided all advance documentation in accordance with the validation procedures.

With regard to the presentation of samples of student work, please refer to Action Point 13.1 (demonstration of the student journey).

Please also refer to Action Point 13.4 regarding explicit mapping of the Master's pathways.

18. 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 Dean and budget holder
- Meeting with Director of the School and the programme team
- Student meeting
- External examiner meeting
- Meeting with the University Rector
- Meeting with Staff