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**Royal Institute of British Architects**

**Report of the RIBA visiting board to  
Universidad Católica de Colombia**

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- 1 Details of institution hosting course/s** **(report part A)**  
Facultad de Arquitectura  
Universidad Católica de Colombia  
Bogotá  
Colombia
- 2 Head of Architecture Group**  
Werner Gomez Benitez
- 3 Course/s offered for revalidation**  
Programme of Architecture, Parts 1 and 2
- 4 Course leader/s**
- 5 Awarding body**  
Universidad Católica de Colombia
- 6 The visiting board**
- |               |                         |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| Sally Stewart | Chair                   |
| Alex Wright   |                         |
| Lilly Kudic   |                         |
| Nick Hayhurst |                         |
| Sophie Bailey | RIBA Validation Manager |
- 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](http://www.architecture.com).
- 8 Proposals of the visiting board**  
On 7 December 2016 the RIBA Education Committee confirmed that the following courses and qualifications are unconditionally revalidated.
- Programme of Architecture, Parts 1 and 2**

The next RIBA visiting board will take place in: 2021

**9 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

**10 Academic position statement**  
(Statement written by the school)

**New context: The Faculty of Design**

Design shown over recent years show a significant change of direction, which can be synthesized with step of being a responsible discipline of producing objects of high aesthetic and artistic value, to become a group of activities and expressions that add value to the more various human activities; design involved in enhancing the quality of life of humans and factor shaping.

Today it is clear that there are a lot of academic programs that incorporate methodologies, processes, and objectives of a defined field such as design, in all cases it is recognized that design today refers to a theoretical and operational body clearly differentiated from which are a varied part of disciplinary expressions, including specific area of architecture.

**Mission**

Train qualified architects, so they can address issues in their field of performance within the framework of their own social and cultural reality of the context in which it operates and lead innovation processes according to troubleshooting in the field of interdisciplinarity.

**Vision**

The study program, research and training discipline, which addresses the object of knowledge regarding the current development plans of the city, the ten-year plan for culture and strategic plans of national programs of science and technology, specifically in the area of human and social sciences, in the context of Latin America.

**Foundations**

The architect study program involves learning processes through exchange and application of contributed knowledge from various fields and disciplines across design, projection, development, and evaluation in relation to certain own objective needs of the disciplinary field action and services aimed at quality, optimization and preservation in the use of resources.

The Architecture Program is committed to developing its curriculum and syllabus so it can adopt the technical and professional requirements set by modern and training society, broadly defined, explicit in the institutional mission, which is developed in the fundamentals described below.

### **Philosophical Foundation**

The architecture study program of the Universidad Católica de Colombia has as philosophical foundation principles of the doctrine of Christ, which unfolds in three areas of training action: a) culture, where it contains and regulates human activity, b) environmental as the ethics of conservation and respect, and c) subject as constructor of meaning and source of all sociability.

### **Epistemological foundation**

The architecture study program of the Universidad Católica de Colombia has as an epistemological foundation a double relationship with knowledge; first, an internal reflection of the architecture discipline object as an organized category, and secondly, the external knowledge of various interacting wisdom and the cultural context which is expressed.

In that sense, links and solidarities with other areas of knowledge that are addressed through an interdisciplinary approach, dialogue as privileged forms in the collective knowledge construction and research as the institutionalized way to stimulate and satisfy curiosity are recognized, through them, it is organized and contextualized the information relate. In short, the Architecture Study Program assumes a dual and simultaneous responsibility; First, in defense of the traditions and heritage both tangible and intangible and second, in recognition of the needs of contemporary society.

### **Sociological foundation**

The architecture study program of the Universidad Católica de Colombia has a sociological foundation recognizing culture as the context in which may describe all social phenomena and processes, involves a scheme historically transmitted meanings expressed in symbolic forms, languages by which men communicate and develop their knowledge. In that sense, architecture is understood as a cultural expression of a public nature, which involves the analysis and interpretation of the various discursive, imaginary, social and sociability forms that determine raw material in which processes are rooted to the transformation toward a democratic effectively and environmentally sustainable society. Architecture participates in the construction of the concepts of the nation and city.

### **Pedagogical foundation**

The architecture study program of the Universidad Católica de Colombia has a pedagogical foundation taking activities leading to development of the person, they manifest on dialogue between peers and conversation as an expression of a non-hierarchical pedagogical relationship, this relationship between teacher and students can move towards an investigative process developed at least three steps: the

qualified observation, discursive interpretation, and argumentation; These three founded in determining relevant issues, and organized problem-oriented core and fields of knowledge within the curriculum.

Methodologically it has the project as a basic instrument of synthesis, which is deployed on two main activities: a) workshop as a collective construction of knowledge and the results circulate through portfolio and logbook, and b) seminar as staging constructed speeches and manifestos autonomously in the theoretical document. Their own language in the various forms of discipline are explained.

The evaluation is based on the agreement on agreed topics and presented in the training package. It takes place in a combined system of evaluation based on achievements (short term) and skills (medium and long term).

### **Psychological foundation**

The architecture study program of the Universidad Católica de Colombia has a psychological foundation, building an environment that stimulates greed for knowledge, social engagement and autonomy of personal conscience of all actors involved in the process, within the precepts contained in the institutional PEI which promote the exercise of personal ethics and knowledge in a democratic and tolerant environment.

### **Training Purposes**

From the statements of the program's mission, the following objectives which form the basis of training were defined

**Purpose 1:** Effectiveness of training based on the analysis, assessment and validation of established skills.

The project recognizes the importance of addressing both current and future real demands that are made to the profession; and solving problems objectives defined in the curriculum, from the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes that effectively demonstrate competencies of our graduates.

The curriculum should not be static, but a dynamic system constantly updated (parametric model) that allows adapt to the evolution of the discipline and the problems of context.

**Purpose 2:** Graduate quality is based on a training process associated with the reality.

The architecture is a learning process based on active and participatory methodologies that permanently link the student with current fact, integrates knowledge to practical experiences of varying degrees of complexity, achieving a close experience that it will see in their future professional work, by the development of real projects in real contexts and with real users.

**Purpose 3:** Efficiency of the training process based on the implementation of a concurrent design.

Based on the integration and synchronization of data from different disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields of action, aims to define a study plan more efficiently regarding the use of the resources, integrating theoretical and practical skills in a problem-oriented core that progressive and synchronously, articulate the training process.

**Purpose 4:** Flexibility, mobility and integration with other disciplines in the process of general training.

It refers to the incorporation of electives that enable particularize training, the action of the Humanities Department which imparts a distinctive hallmark to graduate, streamlining time and defined activities, and interaction with other disciplines.

**Purpose 5:** Optimization of resources in the learning process.

Incorporating face and remote components. The future is to outsource the greater amount of information content to selectively take advantage of the number and variety of resources offered by the internet.

**Purpose 6:** Integration of actors in the process.

Based on the active participation of teachers, students and external stakeholders in the training process. Collaborative and constructive learning and community building activities that promote cooperation among students in their learning process, based on PBL - Problem Based Learning is encouraged.

### **Competences**

They are the result of an agile, dynamic and flexible education system that allows assuming Education as a permanent and responsible process in interacting own systems of general education and training discipline. Its purpose is to identify the different levels of personal development and active participation in social processes. Recognized for the ability to take situations and act in various areas of cultural and professional life in the capacity to work within a complex system forming an organized whole in which scientific culture and the culture of the humanities is mobilized.

They are an expression of the experiences that a student managed to build in their encounter with the particular discipline, therefore, competencies integrate different capabilities in complex structures. Discernable capabilities as orientation purpose of essential program contents it can be broadly classified into intellectual, practical and social.

### **Part 1. Competitive Development. (Profile)**

The student at the conclusion of Part 1 reflects program about disciplinary problems at scales ranging from the individual building to the city, deals with the conceptual, compositional, organizational, technical and operational skills that make its realization possible in the current context. It focuses on three scales design: architectural, urban and technological, and the environment in which it operates, along with a broad range of communication possibilities.

**Part 2. Innovative Development. (Profile)**

The student at the conclusion of Part 2 of the program is prepared to develop and manage projects that add value to a production system and market. Visualizes entrepreneurial opportunities with a creative and innovative methodology in the value chain of production and architectural services; dominates methodological and technological tools that allow him/her successfully be incorporated at working environment.

**Curricular axes and problem-oriented core**

The NP covers a full spectrum of actors involved in solving the problem, provides a reference framework for conducting interactions between them, responding to the requirements of the project, open communication channels that guarantee beneficial results for all fields that intervene.

The NP play a significant role in solving complex problems in a variety of contexts. Each NP defines its area of focus, vertically is gained in depth to develop established skills and using different learning cohesively resources, help clarify project impacts on individuals and groups of people involved in the learning process, allowing work balancing responsibilities of the various fields according to the overall structure.

In each project, we can objectively evaluate results and take into account constraints and impacts according to terms of area's contribution.

Developments in the NP represents a breakthrough in the teaching of discipline putting on stage generation of experiences as an intentional and desirable component of the design activity. More specific, open two research horizons, on the one hand respect experience of the designer in this new context, and on the contrary how a particular user experience is acquired and how it is incorporated as a design object, which means that you have new knowledge and tools that allow a designer to explore consciously experiences consequence of its design

The structure search process efficiency depending concurrent design implementation, which is based on the integration and synchronization between contents from both the fields of knowledge and its practical application to the project.

It establishes a strategic distribution of general development components and defines mechanisms systematization and balanced distribution of content, in an increasing complexity process, is embodied in two large sets of disciplinary action called curricular axes (1. Context and 2. Design) each of which is deployed in specific fields of applied knowledge, and compliance-oriented unified objective training in each problem-oriented core.

The problem-oriented core are forms of organization that allows distribution of specific knowledge, link them and give them meaning and contextualize a particular knowledge and place it on a set.

**Problem-oriented Core 1: Space**

**Problem-oriented Core 2: Location**

**Problem-oriented Core 3: Habitat**

**Problem-oriented Core 4: Business Internship**

**Problem-oriented Core 5: Project**

**Occupational profile**

The occupational field consists of several institutions and public and private companies committed to habitat development, conception and realization of building scale and the urban context. The Architect of the Universidad Católica de Colombia may work independently or associated with companies making delivery projects, design activities, management, construction or consulting and evaluating projects services. Also, it is prepared to locate potential development niches in which can act as entrepreneurs or businesspeople.

**11 Commendations**

The visiting board made the following commendations:

- 11.1 The board commends the school on its commitment to widening participation and providing access to the architectural profession for socially and economically disadvantaged students.
- 11.2 The board commends the school on providing pathways and scheduling a variety of study options to support students in undertaking five years of architectural education.
- 11.3 The board commends the school on the high levels of support provided to each student to foster their personal and professional development.

**12 Conditions**

There are no conditions

**13 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. Failure by the university to satisfactorily resolve action points may result in a course being conditioned by a future visiting board.

- 13.1 The board strongly recommends that the school familiarises itself with the requirements of the validation process as set out in the Procedures for Validation, 2014.
- 13.2 The board strongly recommends that the Academic Position Statement be revised in a manner suitable for publication on the RIBA website as part of the validation process.
- 13.3 The board recommends that in preparation for the next visiting board that there is an inclusive process of engagement with staff in preparation of a critical self-appraisal document.



- 13.4 The board recommends that in preparation for the next validation board that the school puts in place processes to support the student body in the development of a Student Appraisal document.
- 13.5 The board strongly recommends that in preparation for the next validation board that the school produces a document confirming how all action points and advice have been responded to.
- 13.6 The board strongly recommends that the school takes steps to ensure that full academic portfolios are available in the future. The portfolios should include all design and written work within the appropriate semester or year. These should provide clear and coherent evidence of all credit bearing elements.
- 13.7 The board strongly recommends that the school revise and develop the mapping document to clearly demonstrate in which modules the General Criteria and Graduate Attributes are achieved.
- 13.8 The board recommends for the next RIBA visiting board that all required documents including the core syllabus as issued to the teaching staff are made available in English.

**14. Advice**

- 14.1 The board strongly advises that the school develop a moderation process to ensure equity in the application of assessment criteria and grade descriptors across teaching groups and modules.
- 14.2 The board recommends that the school considers the introduction of an extended essay at the Part 2 level which ensures that each student is able to produce clear logically argued and original written work relating to architecture culture, theory and design (Graduate Attribute GA2.4).
- 14.3 The board encourages greater awareness and connection to the developing expertise and research capacity in the field of sustainability, and for this to become present in the work of the part 2 of the programme.

**15 Delivery of academic position**

The following key points were noted: see action point 13.2

**16 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 Parts 1 and 2**

The Board confirmed that all of the Part 1 graduate attributes were met by graduates of the Programme of Architecture. Please see advice point 14.2 regarding the Part 2 graduate attributes.

**17 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.

**Graduate Criteria for Parts 1 and 2**

The Board confirmed that all of the Parts 1 and 2 Graduate Criteria were met by graduates of the Programme of Architecture.

**18 Other information**

**18.1 Documentation provided**

Please see action point 13.8

**19 Notes of meetings**

**\*Notes of meetings**

**On request, the RIBA will issue a copy of the minutes taken from the following meetings:**

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