

CORK'S NEW ARCHITECTURE COURSE GAINS PROFESSION'S RECOGNITION

The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI) have this week confirmed their accreditation for the architecture study programme offered by the Cork Centre for Architectural Education (CCAIE). Only accredited degrees in architecture can lead graduates towards registration as professional architects in accordance with the Building Control Act of 2007.

The Cork Centre was established in 2006, when University College Cork and Cork Institute of Technology came together in response to a report from the Higher Education Authority recommending that a new school of architecture should be established to add to the opportunities offered by the schools in Dublin.

Five years of study, followed by a period of professional practice are required to become a registered architect. In the joint UCC/CIT programme, this is achieved through a four year BSc(Hons)Architecture degree followed by a 12 month Master of Architecture – the first taught Architecture Masters in Ireland.

Last September, the first graduates from the Masters course exhibited their work at the Centre's premises in Copley Street, near Cork City Hall. This work formed the focus of attention for a Visiting Panel from the RIAI, who were making their fifth visit to appraise the new course. The graduates work was considered by the visiting panel of experts to be of an "exceptional standard".

A recent review of the CCAIE exhibition of student work in the Architects Journal, commented on the way the course uses Cork and the region as a "working laboratory, regularly inviting public and private bodies to connect with the school's studies and proposals". *

According to Professor Kevin McCartney, Director of the CCAIE "recognition of our programme by the RIAI, the professional body for architects in Ireland, will make it easier for our graduates to offer their architectural services, not only in Ireland, but throughout the European Union, due to the EU Directive on joint recognition of professional qualifications.

Delivering the complete five year cycle of architectural education has been the priority of our staff since we started the Cork Centre for Architectural Education. Now our programme is officially approved, staff will be able to devote more attention to developing research, community involvement, and enhancing our international links – spreading the name of Cork as a new location on the world map of architectural education."

Ms Katherine Keane, Associate Director of the CCAIE and Head of Department of Architecture CIT emphasises that "since 2006 when the CCAIE accepted its first enrolments, the Centre has worked very closely with the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland (RIAI) in its journey towards accreditation. CCAIE is now part of a global family of institutes offering accredited programmes in Architecture. For the future architect, graduation from an accredited programme in architecture is a primary target. It is the first step towards professional recognition. The location of an accredited programme of architecture in Cork is a great benefit for the local community and a response to local desire to have a recognised programme of architecture in its' midst".

* Stephen Best, "Masterful Cork" in the Architects Journal 26.07.2012, pp72-73