# Case Study: AA School of Architecture

## Facts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fact</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>01_facilities</strong></td>
<td>Bedford Square and Hooke Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>02_number of students</strong></td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>03_number of staff</strong></td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>04_area</strong></td>
<td>ca. 6300 m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>05_studiospace per student</strong></td>
<td>ca. 3.2 m² (+ multifunctional spaces)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>06_libraryspace per student</strong></td>
<td>190 / 650 = 0.3 m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>07_canteen / bar per student</strong></td>
<td>ca. 364 / 650 = 0.56 m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>08_resources within campus</strong></td>
<td>one auditorium, materials workshop, model workshop, digital photo studio, digital prototyping lab, audiovisual department, computer department, restaurant &amp; bar, cinema</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>09_resources in urban context</strong></td>
<td>British Museum, Bedford Square Park, galleries, other art or architecture schools, NLA</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>10_expansion strategy</strong></td>
<td>buying existing neighbouring buildings</td>
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AA ideology: students

There is a big focus on the individual student and performance. The school is good at promoting their best students, either in the school newspaper, their blog or on the corridor wall in the entrance...

They require that the student has a personal relationship with the projects. The students are free to choose what way they want to get into the project. They can choose their own inspiration forms as links to literature, performance, photography etc..
AA ideology: teachers

There may be two teachers for 12 students. To ensure the quality of teaching and have a circulation of teachers the school employs architects to teach for only two years at a time. To have the best students and teaching is important and the school hire architects to teach but also other professionals with different special competence. The school have some architectural office that works closely to the school and also hire selected students.
AA ideology: exhibitions

When the final project exhibition is at school, the school set off a whole week and money to make the exhibition. The result is a professional exhibition that also people outside the school love to come and see. The school opens up to the city and the urban texture.
Bedford Square

AA opened as a day school in 1901 and moved to Bedford Square in 1917. Originally the school occupied nr 34-35, but today they own the whole row from nr 32-39. It has studios at the rear block and formal meeting, presentation and public programme spaces at the front side. The school benefits from many cultural institutions in the nearby urban context.

I think if there is such a thing as a tradition of AA, it is the attitude studying the city through architecture. It is not about conducting researches for making architecture because it is an architecture school, but it is about how to create a relationship between you and the city by designing using architectural vocabulary, skills or knowledge, or understanding what is controlling the city we live in and how through researching using architecture.

- SHIN EGASHIRA, diploma tutor AA
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aa school of architecture

axonometry of Bedford Square
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studiospace
administration
computer lab
workshops
library
bar
reception
lecture hall and exhibition
cantina & bookshop

space program
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library

lecture hall

AA bookshop

cinema
Hooke Park Workshop Campus

Hooke Park is a 350-acre working forest in Dorset, south-west England, owned and operated by the Architectural Association. The park have been a part of AA since 2002, a site for experimentation and fabrication.

From spring 2010 a group of students have been resident full-time at Hooke and the new Design & Make graduate design course began in autumn 2010. These activities are part of a strategic plan for the future of Hooke Park, which has been developed by the AA in consultation with West Dorset Council, the local community and professional advisors and consultants. The Hooke Park woodland is open to the public.

The existing buildings are designed by a collaboration between ABK, Frei Otto, Buro Happold and Edward Cullinan. They used round-wood poles provided by forest thinning.

Future projects will also have a green approach.

Students and tutors have realised a series of small-scale projects within the woodland.
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aa school of architecture

the workshop

the refectory

the workshop

the refectory
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area per student
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**aa school of architecture**

**a** characteristic sides

- Campus located in Georgian style buildings. No particular new building mass
- Crammed and intimate space
- Transformed into exhibition space during summer. Different exhibitions at the school the whole year.
- Expansion by buying additional buildings.
- Has a workshop campus at Hooke Park, far from London
- AA Bookshop
- The restaurant & bar works as an important meeting place.

**b** relevant for the KAM project

- Small and intimate spaces make people meet a lot
- Attracts many people from outside the school:
  - the AA bookshop
  - Open guest lectures
  - Exhibitions
- Active in the urban context
- Uses old building mass
- The main spaces lie close together
- The main stair as a connecting spine

**c** examples that should be dealt with differently

- Anonymous facade - difficult to see the school
- Does not have an intended masterplan for the Bedford Square campus
- Impossible for handicapped people to get around the school
- Restricted access to the park
- The school has a clear backside that makes the street “dead” and blocked out.