

Reflection Thijs Kalkhoven

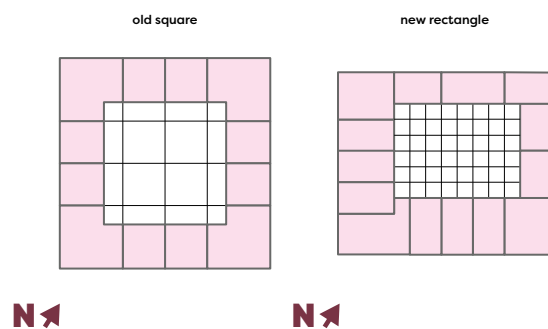
Looking back at my process, there were moments that I struggled a lot and moments that went easier. I struggled most with the research, which largely influenced my P2 presentation. I had to do a retake, because there were some elements I didn't mention, or didn't structure right. This made it difficult to understand the research and presentation. I got feedback on this and by adding information about for example the target group, changing the research question and restructuring the chapters. I think this made it more understandable.

The methods of doing research worked quite well. I believe the observations and interviews during the Field Work taught me a lot. They both gave me a lot of new information, which helped make the architectural guidelines. The Case Study Analysis didn't bring that many architectural guidelines and I think was less helpful. I feel like it would have been more helpful if I had focused on newer buildings rather than try to show a full scape of buildings used for psychiatric clinics. I also feel like I didn't research enough buildings to find common elements, but didn't research them deep enough to truly find the most interesting information. This way, this part of the research was neither wide enough nor deep enough to truly be of the most value. It was definitely valuable for my understanding of the history of psychiatric clinics and for the way buildings dealt with the context, whether clinics were located in urban areas or in natural areas. The Case Study Analysis did increase the role of 'context' in my research. In the end, I feel good about doing the Case Study Analysis, but it feels unfinished, like it could somehow have given me more.

The results of the research, the architectural guidelines, are really interesting. They are easy to use and implement into the design process, as I've now experienced and they give guidance in many parts and scales of the design. I did find other research that supported most of the guidelines, which shows that they are valuable and shared by others. This also shows that many of these already were prior knowledge, which partly limits the added benefit of doing this research.

After the research, I got a little stuck into one of the volume studies I made for the P2. I also limited myself by accepting the plot and nearby areas. There is a large institutional building next to my plot, which will and would always influence the perception of my new design. By seeing that this building would probably not last a long time the way it is right now, and making a new masterplan for the nearby areas, I got to a new building shape and placing on the plot. I believe this now works way better, and the building and surrounding areas fit better together.

After this new shape, there has been a number of changes to the design which have I think greatly benefitted it. The first change was to change the shape from a perfect square to a rectangle. The perfect square felt too formal and created corners that were difficult to deal with for the apartments. With the new shape, the atrium consists of a grid of 2700x2700mm and the ring of building around it is different in depth. This creates a differentiation in apartments. The apartments on the south are now deeper than the ones on the North side, which require more window surface.



Another change is the way the balconies are built up. In the beginning, all balconies had a separate structure and changed a lot in depth. I later changed this to be one frame, which made it easier and more economical to produce. This

also cleaned up the facade which I think was a good thing.

1. What is the relation between your graduation project topic, your master track (Ar, Ur, BT, LA, MBE), and your master programme (MSc AUBS)?

The topic of the studio is Designing for Health and Care. As psychiatric clinics are temporary care homes, the topic has a strong relation with the Master Studio. The Master Programme and especially the Track Architecture have a focus on buildings, direct surroundings/context and the way that people use buildings. These three elements all have an important element within the research and design project.

2. How did your research influence your design/recommendations and how did the design/recommendations influence your research?

For the research, I developed architectural guidelines that would help to design buildings with a high level of autonomy for patients. These guidelines have proven to be very worthy and have helped designing the building from both an organizational level up until the details.

3. How do you assess the value of your way of working (your approach, your used methods, used methodology)?

While designing my project, I've made a lot of use of hand drawings. Both as concept sketches and as presentation drawings. I haven't used a lot of physical models. This helped well in combining the iterative process with a more detailed process. There were weeks that I was more productive and weeks that this was less. Starting with the computer model relatively late helped a lot in being more sure about certain elements.

4. How do you assess the academic and societal value, scope and implication of your graduation project, including ethical aspects?

This research aims to find a way to make the step between psychiatric clinics and own homes smaller and make it easier for people to reintegrate into their own home. The way we treat people with psychiatric problems is a societal question and this project has the intention of making this more humane. There was no research yet that focused on increasing autonomy by architecture for people in psychiatric clinics, but many of the guidelines found were already found in literature. The academic scope and value of the project is possibly more in combining these and making it easier for architects to use and design a building like this.

5. How do you assess the value of the transferability of your project results?

Implementing the research into the design was easy to do, showing that it should also be possible to do on different locations and different projects. Many elements can also be implemented for different target groups.

6. How did having a P2 retake influence your process and project?

As I had my P2 very early, I was able to work on this and change everything before the first studio meeting after the February holiday. In terms of planning, this did not really change that much. I do feel that with this time and extra round of critical feedback, I was able to make it easier for people to understand what the research and project was about. I don't feel like the content or focus changed that much for me, but I get why it was unclear before. I used the time to make it into a more coherent story, which was extended into the presentation as well.

7. What would you take with you into a new design project?

I really enjoyed working with the architectural guidelines. Taking this extra step of carefully thinking about the boundaries and important elements for the design, writing all of them down, organizing them into importance made it easier to make design decisions and base them on something. I had never really done this before, but really enjoyed having it from this process. I will definitely be making guidelines again.

